

SPECIAL CANADA DAY REPORT

CANADA'S

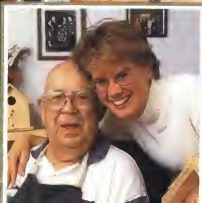
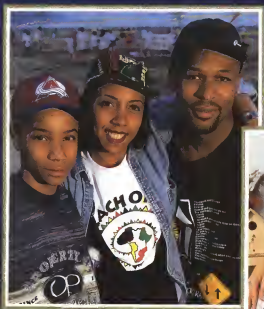
WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

# Maclean's

JULY 1, 1996 ON DISPLAY UNTIL JULY 7, 1996

## LOCAL HEROES

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who are making a  
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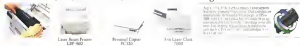


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## Cover LOCAL HEROES



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In the last days of 1995, activist Canadians are remembering a season of generosity, finding creative ways to reach out to the needy in their own communities. In a special Canada Day package, Maclean's honors that generous spirit.

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### Citizenship on sale

The RCMP have charged Gordon Fu of Taiwan with attempted bribery. The case is part of a wider investigation of a special program for wealthy immigrants.



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Securing his victory in the first round of Russia's presidential election, Boris Yeltsin forged an unexpected alliance with a populist, reform-minded former general.

# From The Editor

## Making a difference



**T**he contrast is striking. There they were again, the representatives from Official Canada, parading and prattling in Ottawa, trying to represent a nation that has turned its collective back on the old politics. Down in the trenches, in Unofficial Canada, the real people, with the real problems, were offering a different vision. Despite record bankruptcies, layoffs,

the threat of separation, Unofficial Canada is alive with hope this summer season. In numbers that have never been so large, people are stepping forward to help their fellow citizens and to do good works in their communities. They are conducting walkathons, filing phone logs with goodies for fundraising breakfasts, cooking meals for the homeless, taking care of the handicapped, running hospital boards, building community facilities, establishing self-aiding enterprises. It is a study in contrasts—the politics of confrontation versus the practice of volunteerism, men in suits versus folks in shirts and skirts.

Typical of the breed is Paul Cerniak, a Vancouver engineering consultant who volunteered to help a quadriplegic cope with his disability, first by fastening a door catch from a coat hanger that allowed the man to hold open his freezer door. In the nine years since, Cerniak has become part of an expanded network of 37 chapters of volunteer engineers and technicians helping the handicapped throughout North America. Another exemplar is Peter Llewellyn, a food plant manager in Grand Bank, Nfld., who helped found a centre for troubled youth as the town, like his associates persuaded officials to reopen a long-dormant school



Grand Bank youth intervening a long-dormant school plant

plant and turned it into the scene to make in Grand Bank.

Cerniak and Llewellyn are only two of the scores of people featured in this week's special July 1 report on "Local heroes." They exemplify a growing cast of Canadians in all walks of life, from corporate boardrooms to Indian reserves, who are making a difference in their communities. Cutting across political and ideological lines, people are looking for pragmatic solutions to their problems. But there is more: in a world ravaged by recession and uncertainty, when your kid cannot find a job, when family life is threatened, when fundamental tenets have been overturned, people are trying to pull together for the common good. They long ago stopped looking to governments to solve their problems, and continue to be inspired that the elected leaders still act as if they can. And throughout society, there is a rising interest in spirituality and a remarkable level of faith in God, even as attendance at traditional places of worship declines.

The trend to community is very much the Canadian way, harkening back to the days when our ancestors settled the Precambrian Kingdom. It also coincides with the end of the era of government largesse. So long as people do not delude themselves that volunteers and the private sector will ever take up all the slack caused by government cutbacks, the growing sense of grassroots communities can be a useful reminder of fundamental virtues—it is better to give than to receive, better to get a hand up than a handout.

*Colin J. Lewis*

## Newsroom Notes:

### Cross-country celebration

**T**he week's cover package, a Canada Day celebration of local heroes across the country, represents months of work on the part of Maclean's bureau, writers and photographers. Overseen by Assistant Managing Editor Ann Dewett, Johnson and designed by Associate Art Director Condie Sabatini, the 23-page special report focuses on special individuals from Baffin Island to the Nass Valley, B.C., to Sydney



McDonald, Bennett Johnson

N.S.—all making vital contributions to their own communities. As Senior Writer Marc McDonald notes in her opening article: "Thousands of Canadians are stepping forward to act out, in various ways, the age-old adage: it's better to light a candle than curse the darkness." And in fact, each bureau chief, from Vancouver to Halifax, attested to that truth: asked to shorten the hours from their own region, their contributions were legion. Says Dewett Johnson: "Battered by a recession, weary of political rhetoric, Canadians are determined to fix things in their own backyards. The country's future may be in question, but there is a profound belief in community, in the larger rewards of giving to those around you."

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# The Mail

## TV's impact

Is it a good thing to block TV violence with the V-chip ("Focus TV" Cover, June 17)? It is a better thing for parents to take the responsibility to provide our children with morals, standards and values. It is true for parents to find the good stuff and watch it with, or read it to, our kids—they're worth it.

Angela F. Born,  
Burlington, Ont.

There seems to be an aspect of this debate about violence on TV and its effects on children that is not being addressed. Adults are setting the moral and visual standards that our children watch on TV: adults write the scripts, set the ideas, produce the programs, decide how the characters will dress and what actions, and interaction with each other, they will exhibit—whether they be violent, rude, aggressive, cruel or naïve. The adults who write and produce as the children's entertainment industry must be held more accountable.

Connal Shier,  
Toronto

According to your "Focus TV" cover article, some researchers still claim that what we see and hear on TV does not affect our behavior. Luckily the advertisers haven't figured this out yet.

Kim Bailey,  
Toronto

The Simpson is often cited as an example of what's wrong with television. I would submit that *The Simpson* is one of the funniest, best-written and perceptive television shows ever created. Perhaps the generation-old boy who likes to hear Homer say "D'oh" will one day grow to appreciate the show's more subtle elements: the wonderfully satirical portraits of Mr. Burns, a ruthless industrialist;

Seamus, his obsequious sidekick; or Leech and Hatz, Springfield's most incompetent attorney.

Sean McKeown,  
New York City, N.Y.

Your suggestions that readers either turn off the television or make use of the V-chip to obstruct the impact of television on children totally ignore another more positive approach. Researchers tell us that developing media literacy skills reduces TV's impact on children. The more children think and talk about television, the less influence it has on them. Media literacy—the ability to look critically and think critically—is taught in schools across Canada. By not mentioning it, you not only ignore the work of thousands of Canadian teachers, but also leave parents with little real hope in dealing with the impact of television on children.

John J. Pargenda,  
President, Canadian Association of  
Media Education Organizations,  
Toronto, Ont.

## No popular vote

I would like to commend Maclean's for the fair and balanced coverage of the British Columbia election ("The battle for B.C.," Cover, May 27, and "The B.C. wrap," Cover, June 30). The treatment of the issues, personalities and situations helped to reduce the influence of the major B.C. newspapers.

Arnold Zemanick,  
Victoria

So Premier Glen Clark is a "B.C. freeter"? Just what this troubled country needs—another provincial premier. Are there any Canadians among provincial politicians, or is that too much to expect in this one-first era?

Alister Howler,  
Nelson, Ont.

Your comments on the B.C. election results missed the point. Not only did 41 per cent of the population vote for the Liberals versus 39 per cent for the NDP but fully 61 per cent didn't vote for Premier Glen Clark. Not what TV call a comfortable mar-

## Health and welfare

It was with interest and chagrin that I read your Special Report "The Harris Revolution" (June 10). Ontario Premier Mike Harris promoted a Common Sense Revolution in his election campaign, but as far as I can see, his cuts have gone beyond common sense. Certainly as an April Environics poll pointed out, the government received a great deal of support from men who earn more than \$60,000 per year and who are 55 and older. They are secure. They do not have to worry about supporting a barely on minimum wage or reduced welfare payments. An Environics poll also pointed out that the population now believes that the cuts are too deep—and they fear for their quality of life. Rightly so.

Gail M. Boda,  
Thunder Bay, Ont.

Forget the cost issue—a large majority of B.C. voters cast their ballot against the NDP and its tax-and-spend policies. Clark can try to honey-coat the results but the fact remains, most of us do not want him, or the NDP.

Michael Coyne,  
Langley, B.C.

## Misinformation

The letter from D. C. McCaffrey in your May 20 issue ("Dealing with refugees") states: "The Canadian refugee determination process has become so chaotic that one in six refugee claimants, according to RCMP figures, is charged with a crime while entering Canada." While this letter was written by a private citizen, I thought it important to provide clarification on this statement and to state for the record that the RCMP does not substantiate these figures. In fact, as such records are kept by the RCMP.

Duncan Hooey,  
Director, Public Affairs and  
Information Services  
Royal Canadian Mounted Police  
Ottawa

## 'Damaged reputation'

As you have recently reported, many of the individuals who appeared before the blood inquiry under Judge Hansen Kervin have applied to the Federal Court of Canada to set aside judgments of alleged misconduct. PCP had blood and blame," *Canada*, June 20. As a scientist and physician who worked in the federal health department for more than 25 years, I feel con-

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# Citizenship on sale

## Investigating Ottawa's immigrant investor plan

BY SHAR LEVINE  
and ANDREW PHILLIPS

The target is striking, but not completely revealing. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien smiles out from the pages of a Taiwanese-Canadian newspaper and shows the hand of Gordon Fu, the president of a high-profile company that specializes in immigration from Taiwan to Canada. What the photograph does not show is that during the private meeting in the Prime Minister's Office in Ottawa on Feb. 28, Fu took the highly unusual step of personally handing Chrétien a letter asking that the Prime Minister speed up his application for permanent residency in Canada. Fu was angry that although he leads the biggest consulting company in what has become the hottest Asian market for Canadian business immigration, his own application had been stalled by federal officials. "I have brought in over \$55 million of business to this country," he complained later in an interview with *Maclean's*. "Why shouldn't they let me in? Why should I have to wait so long?"

One reason for the wait became evident on June 14 when the RCMP told criminal charges against Fu and his brother Robert, who leads the Canadian arm of the family business, Imperial Consultants Ltd. The charges, led in Ottawa provincial court in Ottawa, allege that the Fu brothers attempted to bribe two senior officials of the federal immigration department, John Martin and Michael Bradley Martin, director of

Ottawa's business immigration division, and Bradley, a senior investment analyst with the immigration department, were in a position to influence a decision affecting income investment funds controlled by Robert and Gordon Fu. According to police sources, the charges involve allegations that the Fu brothers offered each official \$50,000 to change a department ruling that suspended several of their funds. Last week, Robert Fu was arrested on the charges in Vancouver, and a warrant was issued for the arrest of Gordon Fu, who is based in the Taiwanese capital, Taipei. The charges against the two men are only part of a wider investigation: over sixteen the bribery charges were laid, Imperial Consultants was the target of a wide-ranging RCMP inquiry. And police officials have told *Maclean's* that the RCMP and Immigration officials are now co-operating in an investigation of the Fu's extensive business operations.

That, in turn, opens wider questions about Ottawa's immigrant investor fund, launched 11 years ago as a fast track for wealthy newcomers to Canada. Federal officials say the program has brought in just over \$3.1 billion and at least 45,000 people into Canada since it began in 1986. The idea is that the money would be made available as risk capital for Canadian companies, creating thousands of new jobs. But according to immigration lawyers and even some government officials, the system is being widely abused—and the greatest area of abuse was in Taiwan. In effect, say the critics, Canada has given up control of a major aspect of its immigration policy to foreign-based consultants, many of whom use unscrupulous methods including falsification of documents to qualify their clients for Canadian status. And, the critics add, the benefits that Canadians have been led to expect from these wealthy immigrants may be more apparent than real. Although the regulations require them to invest a minimum of \$250,000 or \$350,000, depending on the province, for five years to obtain residency in Canada, that money often does not come into the country.



Gordon Fu and Charles Chen in the Prime Minister's office; Imperial's Vancouver office. "Why shouldn't they let me in?"

ign-based consultants, many of whom use unscrupulous methods including falsification of documents to qualify their clients for Canadian status. And, the critics add, the benefits that Canadians have been led to expect from these wealthy immigrants may be more apparent than real. Although the regulations require them to invest a minimum of \$250,000 or \$350,000, depending on the province, for five years to obtain residency in Canada, that money often does not come into the country.

In fact, land managers can, and often do, use elaborate shell games so that their clients qualify by putting up only a fraction of the cash required. And even that money, say police sources familiar with ongoing investigations into some investor funds, sometimes remains in overseas accounts. The result, say the system's many critics, is that Canadian residency, and eventually citizenship, is for sale at bargain prices.

"The investor immigration program has always stunk," said an immigration department official with extensive experience in Asia who knows that his name need not be used. "And in Taiwan, it stinks twice that severely else 'there is no answer here'."

Canadian officials familiar with the trade say that many consultants operating in Taiwan have become so sophisticated in preparing their clients' applications that they—unlike Canadian immigration officials—effectively control who can get into this country through the investor immigration and entrepreneur immigration programs. "There isn't staff to check all the applications," says the immigration official. "It's mostly a paper transaction between lawyers and consultants. It's a Patented Villager, a charade, and the taxpayer's interest is not being served."

Taiwan is the focus of the latest concern for several reasons. The country's booming economy has produced many millionaires anxious—and able—to buy security in a stable country like Canada. Recent visits with the Communist People's Republic of China produced new interest from Taiwanese who felt political trouble down the road. Unlike Hong Kong, where most business people speak English and are relatively familiar with Canada, Mandarin-speaking Taiwanese tend to be easier targets for consultants who promise to arrange their passage into a strange new land. And Canada's

lack of formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan makes it more difficult for Canadian immigration officials to investigate questionable behavior there.

The charges against Robert and Gordon Fu involve only the alleged bribery—not any other practices. The Fu brothers are major players in the 10-year-old immigrant investor program, which attracted \$600 million and 2,000 investors to this country last year alone. With offices in Taiwan and Hong Kong as well as Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Mississauga, N.H., Imperial Consultants alone has brought some 3,000 Taiwanese families to Canada since it was founded in 1987. It advertises a full range of services, charging consulting fees averaging \$12,000 per applicant, and signing up many of its clients for the services of its related travel agency, real estate company and visa brokerage. More lucrative, though, are commissions from the tens of millions of dollars of clients' money invested in a dozen private investment funds controlled by Robert and Gordon Fu. At the time of the February meeting in Chrétien's office, the brothers were aware that the government was about to bring in new regulations strictly limiting the eligibility of privately administered venture capital funds open to immigrant investors. Those new rules, which are to come into effect on June 30, were prompted by several high-profile cases involving mismanaged and even fraudulent funds. After June 30, private firms will no longer be allowed to set up new investment funds for business immigrants, or accept new money for existing funds. Prospective immigrants will have to direct their money to government-sponsored funds instead.

Those restrictions have alarmed the scores of consultants in Taiwan who earn fat fees by helping Taiwanese invest the millions needed for residency in Canada. In so doing as a Taiwanese newspaper, one prominent firm specializing in immigration to Canada, called *Chiu Chiu* (Confucius), warned politicians that "Canadian immigration is entering a dark time. Restrictive policies will exclude a greater number of immigrants as refusal rates increase dramatically." The 150-member Taiwan Immigration Consultants Association in Taipei recently sent a letter of protest to Canada's Commissioner in Hong Kong, which handles immigration applications from Taiwan. "Most of our clients are from Canada as the number 1 choice for immigration, but it seems the Canadian government has become tougher," says Ong Tuo, the association's chairman. "They're making it very tough for us."

Publicly, however, officials at the Canadian trade office in Taipei maintain that it is "business as usual" for immigrants to Canada. And it is true. The immigration department led the program as a way to bring money to Canada and create jobs. Department spokesman John Oliver and the new rules restricting private funds are aimed at dealing with the main problems with the program—including the fact that some investors bring only part of the required money into Canada. "We understand the government's dilemma," he said. "It's a matter of redesigning it so it attracts real capital that goes to small and medium-sized businesses." According to department figures, the immigrant investor program has created 25,245 jobs since 1986.

Still, the program is evidently a sensitive subject for Ottawa. When *Maclean's* began asking inquiries into the program, the editorial board's investigation was met in early March by the minister of immigration, including a confidential fund message from Rick Morrison, executive assistant to Georges Tard, an assistant deputy minister of Immigration. Morrison's message warned several department officials about the inquiries and asked for advice on what "steps we should take for damage control." One story of Imperial Consultants' misdeeds after Chrétien's story of the investor immigration program a decade ago. At that time, the Fu brothers were involved in their

family's business in Taiwan, selling chemicals. They soon switched to selling Canada, and Robert Fu moved to Vancouver to open up a Canadian operation that now employs about 80 people (in addition to 300 staff in Taiwan). Their brother, Tim, and the wives of all three men are also involved in what has become the biggest company in the booming Taiwan-Canada immigration business.

Gordon Fu came to the Prime Minister's Office case through Montreal-based Levesque Brothers Consulting, one of the largest Quebec-based investment firms dealing with business immigration. Until recently, Imperial was the exclusive agent in Taiwan for a Quebec firm managed by Levesque Brothers: Louis Leblanc, vice-president and director of the company, was responsible for setting up the February meeting at which Fu presented his plan to the Prime Minister. (A spokesman for Christie said last week that the meeting involved potential investors in a hotel in the Prime Minister's Quebec riding, and that any letter given to him would have been passed on through "normal channels.") Fu told Maclean's that when he met the Prime Minister he was "very angry" that his own application for permanent residency in Canada had been delayed for 18 months. "That's a very bad treatment for me," he said. Later, however, Fu acknowledged that it was inappropriate for him to ask the Prime Minister to intervene in his case. "That is a mistake," he said, adding that "cultural differences" between Canada and Taiwan accounted for his gesture.

Imperial Consultants also attempted to exploit the aid of another man with political connections to the immigration department, former Conservative minister Gerry Weaire. Weaire, minister of state for Immigration from 1986 to 1988, moved Imperial's offices in Taiwan and accepted a two-day stay and trip from Montreal to Vancouver in February to mark the Chinese New Year as a guest of Imperial, which also published his picture in its client newsletter. Last week, Weaire said that the Puss had made "a number of offers" to him, but he did not accept any of them. "I do not have any relationship or employment with Imperial Consultants," he added.

Imperial was dealing with Levesque Brothers for another reason that drew critics of the investor immigration program. As part of its in-depth immigration policy, Quebec runs its own program for investors, separate from that administered by Ottawa and covering all the other provinces. By requiring that all immigrant investments be made through a regulated broker and investor in a Quebec company, the province gives business immigrants a high degree of security. There is no requirement, however, that immigrants who take advantage of the Quebec program's favorable terms actually stay there—and few do. Instead, they qualify for Canadian residency but usually go to Toronto or Vancouver, home to Canada's biggest Taiwanese community (about 65,000 people).

"This investor is a typical 'one-time' investor in the immigration community, not an 'entrepreneur'—leading to one promoter and benefiting immediately to another. As a result, Quebec gets the financial benefits of immigrant investment (some \$1.1 billion in the past decade), while other provinces (mostly British Columbia) end up with the cost of educating the immigrants' children, medical benefits, and the social tensions that come from the arrival of many newcomers that have not contributed to the immigration but all the social ills that come to British Columbia. It's a double whammy for British Columbia," says a disgruntled provincial trade official based in Ajax, who also asked for anonymity "Do you can't blame the immigrants. The system allows them to do it, so why not?"

Managers of private funds set up for immigrant investors fear that Ottawa's new regulations will cut off their main source of income. They grumble that even more new investments will now go to

Quebec (which now gets fully half of all such money coming into Canada), because it is not covered by the federal rules. As a result, it will be the only province able to produce new private investment funds, while only government-sponsored funds will be able to operate in the rest of the country. Private fund managers outside Quebec say that as an unfair advantage, since they will no longer be allowed to create new funds, market to overseas investors or manage their investments in Canada.

Most of the private funds that Imperial sells are based in provinces that require a minimum investment of just \$250,000 (only British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec funds require at least \$350,000). They are also higher-risk. Tim Gordon and Robert Fu point out that Imperial Consultants do not actually own the private funds they are owned or managed by the Puss or members of their families. The Fu brothers have even established their elderly mother, Young-Fang Chao, as manager of several funds. These funds include Atlantic Capital Corp., Atlantic Precursor Fund, Atlantic Growth Fund Corp., B.E.I. Growth Fund Corp., Mount Royal



Capital Corp., AB Dynamic Fund Corp., RLC Capital Corp., NB Growth Fund Corp., NS Growth Fund Corp., and AB Capital Corp. Together, they represent investments of more than \$257 million.

Crises of the system propose several ways to correct its most glaring flaws. One suggestion voiced by those concerned about immigrants "trespassing" into Quebec to other provinces is that investors be required to reside in the province where they place their money for a period of three years. That would affect 68 per cent of those who have invested through the Quebec plan and then move on to settle in other provinces. New immigrants, knowing there is a residency requirement, would be free to choose to live in Quebec or to invest in the province where they intend to live. Says Richard Korman, a Montreal immigration lawyer and advisor to the Quebec immigration department, "That would fix the moral contract the immigrant investor makes when he declares that the intended province of destination is Quebec."

Other critics maintain that rules governing who can act as an immigration consultant should be tightened. The federal immigration department recently endorsed that idea, saying it is prepared to consider licensing consultants as part of a strategy aimed at protecting the public against abuse. At present, many Canadian-based consultants regulate their own activities. The Toronto-based Organization of Professional Immigration Consultants requires its 200 members to follow rules of professional behavior and a code of ethics. However, says spokesman Paul Billings, Ottawa has derided OPI's attempts to police the business by allowing unregulated overseas consultants to deal with immigration officials. "Not only the industry, but the country as a whole is being gouged by black eye by these unscrupulous consultants and immigration lawyers," says Billings. "We are a bit frustrated."

Still other critics, even within the immigration department itself, take a harsher view. "They should eliminate the whole done program," one official said bluntly. "It's a scam." With tens of millions of dollars at stake, however, that is advice Ottawa is unlikely to follow.

With JACQUE BRADLEY in Hong Kong

## Mission accomplished



Gordon, Clark, Roussard and Roussard - a four-minute discussion on the amending clause

BY ANTHONY WILSON-SMITH

In the most exclusive political club in Canada, membership has its privileges—and a curious but consistent code of behavior. Whenever the country's First Ministers get together, as they did last week in Ottawa, the protocols are invariably complex about perceived agencies influenced by the federal government. Then, at the end, the prime minister authorizes a declaration that while no agreement was reached on anything substantive, everyone was heartened by the discussions.

Just a funny thing happened on the way to the conclusion of a day and a half of talks between Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, the 10 premiers and two territorial leaders. This time, the leaders achieved full or partial agreements in several significant areas. Along with the usual divorce issues, including the Constitution and regional disputes,

## Testiness aside, the First Ministers reach consensus

and a suitable fix of plaque for British Columbia's moose poacher, Jean Clark, they managed to achieve consensus on the creation of a national securities commission that will involve eight provinces. New agreements were also reached on pan-Canadian environmental controls, as well as shifting more control over manpower training, fisheries and mining to the provinces. And in the spirit of co-operation, most of the premiers, including, apparently, Quebec's Les Bouchés, will join Chrétien on a third First Ministers Asian business mission—this time to the Philippines, South Korea

and Thailand—next January. Declared Chrétien: "The premiers told me they had never come to a meeting before where they discussed so many different subjects in such a short time."

As a result, a meeting that federal officials deliberately sought in advance to downplay ended with an unusual degree of accomplishment and no small amount of controversy. The biggest cause of both was the creation of the national securities commission. While Quebec and British Columbia refused to join in, it is likely to delight investors and pragmatists in the field by ending duplication and simplifying the operations of the often complex and costly business of regulating publicly traded companies. But one of the problems for the provinces joining the national program, in short, is that they will lose revenues from current fees charged by provincial commissions. And, predicted Beaudet, the 10 Canadian commissions, which will almost certainly be based in Toronto, will be so big that it will swamp the two remaining provincial commissions in Quebec and British Columbia and create "some kind of chaos."

Meanwhile, in dealing with what Chrétien calls his "first-bled" approach to reforming federalism, the Prime Minister agreed that Ottawa will gradually extract itself almost entirely from such fields as forestry and mining, where it previously shared jurisdiction with the provinces. Still, many of the premiers are unhappy with that the transfer of power will not be accompanied by a transfer of money or tax points. Instead, the provinces will be expected to pay for the new services they will suffer from their existing resources.

The meeting also made substantial progress on the highly controversial issue of social programs. Most provinces have barely protested the fact that Ottawa has cut its cash contributions to provincial health and welfare programs but still sets strict standards for that spending. Last week, Chrétien finally agreed that the federal government will work with the provinces to

## Canada

did ways to set those standards together. As well, Ontario Premier Mike Harris won general support for his insistence that, when the provinces take over manpower training, money must be allocated on the basis of each province's number of unemployed. That means that Ontario, with 25 per cent of unemployed Canadians, will likely get 35 per cent of the estimated \$8-billion training fund. "In that case, there is not room for debate," warned Harris.

But disagreements still marked much of the meeting. Outside of the department of for-profit others building, where Friday's meetings took place, native leaders demonstrated against their exclusion from the conference. Assembly of First Nations national chief Ovide Mercredi pledged a renewed push for native sovereignty "in order to get attention in this country." Inside, the leaders conducted business as usual—which meant they found no shortage of things to express disappointment with. During the talks, the range and depth of complaints clearly showed that as well as getting angry at Ottawa, the premiers are also quite capable of being annoyed with each other. Alberta's Ralph Klein, Ontario's Harris, and British Columbia's Clark, for example, complained about Ottawa's decision to give \$1 billion to three Atlantic provinces to compensate them for the harmonization of their value-added taxes with the federal Goods and Services Tax. Atlantic premiers, in turn, complained about those complaints.

But Clark, if anything, eclipsed his fellow premiers with the volume and vehemence of his complaints about Ottawa. The course of his anger, along with annoyance over the securities commission, was Ottawa's refusal to hand over jurisdiction over federalism in the wake of vastly depleted western revenues off the Pacific coast. Clark called the meeting "a big waste of time," denounced the federal government's "arrogance" and "mismanagement" and suggested that British Columbia will behave in future "in a more constitutional way" although he did not specify what he meant. As well, at one point during the Thursday night dinner of roast lamb and turkey at 34 Sussex Drive, he hinted strongly that he would boycott the next Prime Minister's Conference.

He also suggested by several other remarks that Harris supported fairly that perhaps Clark "was still in an election mode," while Newfoundland's Brian Tobin said much the same thing. New Brunswick's Frank McKenna told Clark that the trade unionism represented important contributions

to national unity. And the B.C. premier's public remarks annoyed other leaders, several of whom suggested that he was posturing. Said Christie: "He was not like that inside the room. He was very nice."

All that came to pass in the wake of determined efforts by several leaders to ensure that the meeting would not be characterized by chaos and disagreement. Christie's alternate annoyed and alarmed most of the premiers when he lectured them before the meeting on the importance of not appearing too combative in public. Such behavior, he said, would only play into the hands of Quebec separatists looking for proof that federalism is inflexible and unworkable (Bouchard, needless to say,

## The B.C. premier eclipsed Bouchard in his complaints about Ottawa



McKenna talking with native protesters asking Christie's "step-by-step" approach to federalism

was not angry to that lecture). As a result, one premier told Mercredi that during the dinner at Christie's residence, many of them were "sneaking on cigarettes."

But at the same time, during a meeting that all sides insisted would concentrate almost exclusively on economic issues, the leaders still found time to take-and-argue-about a number of seemingly unrelated issues. Not surprisingly, the Com-

servation was foremost among them. The Prime Minister put the topic on the agenda, in order to fulfil a constitutional requirement that all eight Ottawa and the provinces to discuss the spending formula in April 1997. Christie had also hoped, at one point, to place Quebecers by discussing possible ways to give the province constitutional recognition as a distinct society, as well as a new over future consoci-



Reynolds (left), Klein, Clark and Harris, jockeying for position behind closed doors

mission centred on the spending formula and, officials estimated, took no longer than four minutes—but fulfilled the constitutional requirement.

Some of the premiers gave equally short shrift to a federal proposal to create and partially fund a second infrastructure program similar to Ottawa's 1993 plan, under which the federal government contributed \$2 billion—funding that was matched by provincial and municipal governments—to such areas as roads and sewers. On this plan, there was disagreement on two fronts. Clark and Harris both initially suggested that the federal amount amounted to nothing more than a pre-election ploy. As well, the plan was delayed because the provinces did not agree over how the money should be spent—or how it should be raised. Klein and Manitoba's Gary Filmon wanted the money used to repair highways, while Bouchard pushed for more investment in research and development facilities. In the end, the premiers agreed to further study. If the plan proceeds, individual provinces will likely be allowed greater flexibility in

spending. In addition, the private sector may be asked to replace cost-strapped municipalities.

Almost as surprising as the meeting itself was the jockeying for position that took place between the provinces and Ottawa. Quebec brought a massive delegation of 25 officials to the meeting. Ontario, by contrast, brought five. Similarly, Quebec officials not only arrived in Ottawa in great numbers in advance, taking up as much as 10 per cent of the hotel space, but also made every effort to see Bouchard leaving, as promised, when the Constitution was discussed. Ontario, for its part, led a determined but deliberately more low-key effort to have Ottawa change the manner in which employment insurance funds are distributed among provinces. At present, Ontario receives only half as much in unemployment insurance benefits—about \$6 billion—as its taxpayers contribute. For all that, and despite their disputes with British Columbia and Quebec, federal officials seemed to be satisfied and relieved by the exercise. "We got a lot done," Christie boasted. "No one should be surprised that we disagree—in a democracy, that is what happens." By that definition, the democratic tradition is alive and well in Canada—and will likely be so for generations to come.

By Mike JANZEN and E. RAYE ELECTION in Ottawa

## PENSION CRUNCH FOR THE BOOMERS

For 35 years, since its birth in the booming 1960s, the Canada Pension Plan has operated on a simple pay-as-you-go principle. Today's workers pick up the tab for today's elderly and disabled recipients. But as the nation's federal and provincial finance ministers publicly acknowledged after a daylong meeting in Fredericton last week, that formula has left its charm. Today's seniors have contributed much less to the CPP than their benefits are worth—because their deductions simply covered the tab for the small cohort of elderly who actually collected benefits. Worse, the system was not designed to deal with the large population bulge of the baby boomers. When those boomers retire, their entitlement, and perhaps rebellious children will be saddled with contribution rates that will be almost triple the current CPP deduction from pensionable earnings. "The serious issue is if future generations be willing to pay it in more for the same benefits," says John Balfour, president of the Canadian Institute of Social Policy, a public policy think tank. "If governments change the contribution rate now, the baby boomers will help to pay for their own pensions."

To ease the burden on future generations, and to precisely what the beleaguered finance ministers have opted to do—although the details of their CPP overhaul will not be concluded until this fall. Their deliberations are of vital importance to many Canadians, this year. 2.3 million people will collect CPP retirement benefits of \$11 billion. Senior federal advisers told McKenna that the finance min-

isters are unlikely to tamper with the benefits of current recipients—the maximum monthly pension at age 65 is \$127.08—or with the provision that provides full indemnification for inflation. Instead, the ministers will likely increase the CPP deduction from 5.6 per cent of pensionable earnings to approximately 10 per cent over the next six to eight years. Employers and employees split the contribution, which currently applies to earnings between \$3,500 and the CPP's ceiling of \$35,400, with the maximum contribution now at \$1,706 per year. They are also likely to begin extracting contributions from currently exempt groups by freezing or even reducing the lower limit of \$3,500, which is now indexed for—and thereby protected from—inflation. And the ministers will tighten eligibility criteria for disabled claimants, venturing out and with who claim benefits on the basis of such ailments as neurodegenerative disease. While cuts to benefits of future recipients are on the horizon, they are likely to be small—less than five per cent.

Whatever the ministers do, it is likely to be controversial. Any increase in CPP contributions, for one, means less money in taxpayers' pockets. Worse, it adds to an employer's cost for each employee. Some provincial finance ministers, such as Ontario's Ernie Eves, have urged Ottawa to cut its employment insurance premiums to compensate for the additional CPP charges. "This per cent of pensionable earnings is going to be devastating," warned Garth Whyte, national affairs vice-president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. As the ministers juggle the fine print, each break warnings are simply the first shots in the battle ahead.

MIKE JANZEN



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## CANADA

# Jean Boyle under siege

A new report casts doubt on the general

Talk about a baptism by fire. Ever since he took over as Canada's chief of defence staff in January, Gen. Jean Boyle has felt the heat from the public inquiry into Canada's ill-fated mission to Somalia in 1992-1993. Now, the flames continue to lick at his boots as the inquiry continues—with new concerns raised about his involvement in an alleged attempt to cover up the scandal. According to a military police report

letter, dated May 30, 1995, and approved by Defence Minister David Collette and other senior bureaucrats, warning Vernon that he cannot use Canadian Forces or department of national defence resources to prepare for his testimony, Jan. Hart, the Reform party's defence critic, condemned the treatment of Vernon. "It is obvious that the chief of defence staff has been given special treatment," he said. Boyle will no doubt be questioned about

Boyle prepares to give evidence at the Somalia inquiry.



"If you're outside the test, you can't use a photocopier."

In this case, being inside the test is not having the help of five officers, who on April were ordered to prepare for Boyle a chronology of the events surrounding the abduction of documents (according to previous testimony of the inquiry, Boyle had previously indicated in the spring to a judge that he was unsure how much he knew about the plan). Those officers were sworn to secrecy. But in the case of Vernon, who appeared before the inquiry last week, being on the outside meant a

his use of the five officers when he appears before the inquiry sometime after the one-week summer recess, which begins on June 27. More grudging, though, will be the commission's interrogation of the general over the document tampering caper. Col. Geoff Haswell, the only individual charged to date as a result of the scandal, has maintained that in 1993 Boyle, then an associate assistant deputy minister in the department of national defence, knew of the scheme to release declared papers. And, contrary to Boyle's statement to military investigators last December that he

knew nothing about the documents, a memo written in November, 1993, and issued two months ago calls into question those assertions. That memo discussed the plan to alter documents—and featured Boyle's signature.

After the appearance of the memo, investigators again tried to question Boyle in May. But according to the military police report issued at the inquiry last week, during that three-minute meeting Boyle refused to answer questions on the advice of his lawyer—leading investigators to ask in their report whether he "deliberately misled" them during earlier questioning. Through government lawyers, Boyle has said that he simply forgot about the memo. But Hart, for one, disbelieves that claim. "It is unbelievable that something that important would slip his mind," he said.

The inquiry's three commissioners may also react with incredulity—given that they have already expressed a growing impatience with the coexistence of some witnesses. "They will not just want the truth, but the whole truth," says retired colonel Michel Despres, a former critic of Boyle. Last week, meanwhile, Collette again came under attack as he tried calls to fire Boyle—or at least move him aside until the inquiry determines the extent of his involvement. But, as always, the defence minister remained steadfast in his support of Boyle. In fact, on a tour of northern military installations last Friday, Collette told reporters that the general was doing "a great job."

The minister's claims aside, critics say that the scandal, and the increasing allegations surrounding Boyle, have inflicted grave damage on a military establishment already suffering from the Somalia affair and continuing budget cuts. The lid is likely to continue

With the document scandal having distracted the inquiry from its original focus—the killing of Somalis by Canadian troops—the government last week extended the commission's mandate by one month, with the initial report scheduled for March, 1997. In the long term, that will likely result in further, and unpleasant, revelations for the Canadian Forces. And in the short term, with the country's military chief scheduled to take the stand in August, it promises to be a long, hot summer.

LUKE FOSBERG in Ottawa

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## CANADA

# A teen says Warlock drove him to murder

## Did a horror film spark a brutal child slaying?

Residents in the normally quiet community of La Ronge, Sask., 400 km northwest of Saskatoon, reeled with shock and disbelief last summer when a local teenager was charged with first-degree murder in the brutal slaying death of seven-year-old Jonathan Thompson. But it was not until last week, when 14-year-old Sandy Charles stood trial in adult court in Saskatoon, that the full horror of the crime sank in. After the lucky teenager pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity, the court heard how Charles and an unnamed eight-year-old accomplice lured Thompson into the bush near his home. Charles repeatedly stabbed Thompson and crushed his skull with a 125 lb rock. Then, apparently misreading a ritual he saw in the 1981 movie *Warlock*, Charles tore 15 strips from Thompson's body and buried the flesh into liquid fat. After his arrest, Charles told police he was in the thrall of spirits when he committed the murder. "I started to think about killing," he said. "Something wanted me to."

Most of the teenager last week centred on the teenager's motivation and state of mind at the time of the killing. Defence lawyer Barry Singer said that Charles had been deeply affected by *Warlock*, which he viewed at least 10 times in the days leading up to the murder. Like the title character in the movie, Singer said that Charles believed he would become a spirit if he were able to fly if he drove the buried fat of an unslayed male child. Singer also called psychiatric experts who testified that Charles was suffering from a serious mental disorder and that he had lost touch with reality when he ended Thompson's life. But prosecutor Brian Rutter suggested that Charles could tell right from wrong and noted that he and his accomplice—who could not be charged because of his age and who is now in a foster home—had decided to kill a child 10 days before the murder and selected Thompson as their victim. Rutter also said that Charles had told youth judge that he hoped to be declared insane so that he would be sent to a psychiatric hospital and released in two years.

The trial was to continue this week. But it has already revived the thorny debate over



Charles, seeking to become a spirit of the dead

the impact of violence in the media. Wendy Josephson, a University of Winnipeg psychologist who has studied TV violence, told *Newsweek* that so-called copycat murders tend to follow a familiar pattern, with the perpetrator strongly identifying with a role model, researching and finally acting on it. She added that the most vulnerable are those adolescents who tend to think what they see in the visual media is real and who do not have enough countervailing positive influences in their lives. "There is a cost to having so much exposure to violence," she said. "What we have to decide as a society is what to do about it."

Back in La Ronge, residents had more immediate concerns as they reached out to comfort one another at church services and healing circles. Beyond the gruesome evidence in the case, observed local United Church minister Heather Wyke, the most shocking aspect was the age of both the perpetrators and victim. "That's not supposed to happen," she said. "Children are not supposed to kill children. Something is very wrong."

JULIAN BIRCHMAN with JAMES PURDIE in Saskatoon

## Canada NOTES

### COPPS BACK IN CABINET

Two days after a landslide by-election won in Ontario's Hamilton East riding, Liberal veteran Sheila Copps regained her old job of deputy prime minister and heritage minister. Copps resigned in May after promising in the last general election to quit if her party failed to win the Goods and Services Tax.

### THE CHANGING FAMILY

Married couples with children accounted for only 44.6 per cent of Canadian families in 1995, down from 55 per cent in 1981, Statistics Canada says. Over the same period, the percentage of families consisting of single parents with children or non-married couples with or without children rose sharply, to 38 per cent from 17 per cent.

### RAIL GRANTED

The Nova Scotia Supreme Court granted bail to seven Taiwanese officers who are charged with murdering three Romanians enroute. Philippine court members of the container ship *Manila Dube* said the officers forced at least two Romanians onboard, without their consent, 35 miles off the coast of Spain in March. But defence lawyers said that the ship tamed around when the Romanians were discovered—and that they were put off the ship about one mile from land, with the passengers, a life raft and supplies.

### NOT GUILTY

According to a House of Commons committee, Elise Quinlan MP Jean-Marie Jacob was not guilty of sedition or contempt of Parliament when he sent a letter to Quebec's military bases before last October's sovereignty referendum. But the committee said that the letter, which urged soldiers to transfer their loyalty to Quebec if the province voted to secede, had been "ill-directed."

### QUEBEC AND CANADA

A survey by Martin's Lager & Lager polling firm suggests that 45.3 per cent of Quebecers want the province to remain in Canada, while 54.9 per cent want Premier Lucien Bouchard to work with other politicians to reverse the decision. At the same time, 64.0 per cent said they would vote in favor of Quebec sovereignty coupled with a continuing economic and political association with the rest of Canada, in last October's referendum, 49.4 per cent voted in favor of sovereignty.



Think with me, Brenda, before the launch: honoring Bobby Orr

## A Canadian in orbit

The space shuttle *Columbia* blasted off through a partially cloudy Florida sky into orbit—with Canadian astronaut Dr. Robert Thirk on board. Thirk, 42, is the fifth Canadian to participate in a shuttle flight—in this case, a mission expected to last 17 days during which he and his six colleagues, the Americans and one Frenchman, will conduct medical, biological and technological experiments. Among other things, the astronauts will

participate in an experiment to uncover the causes of "space sickness"—a version of motion sickness.

Thirk, a B.C. native, is a space medicine researcher with the Canadian Space Agency. He became interested in space when U.S. astronaut John Glenn visited the earth in 1962—the first American to do so. "That's when it really started," Thirk said before the start of the *Columbia* mission. He added that the research on the space shuttle is "almost like it was designed for me, my interests and my abilities." But the father of three young children has more on his mind than just medical studies. Among the me-

morises Thirk took with him into space are a Boston Bruins hockey jersey belonging to his boyhood idol, Bobby Orr, and one of Orr's Stanley Cup championship rings. Before the flight, Thirk—who has never met Orr—offered the former hockey star to sign "out of respect, if I could by something for him." Now, Thirk says jokingly, "he doesn't get his leg back and he promises to meet me face-to-face."

### PAUL CLAPTON

## A Liberal setback

The federal government was thrown into turmoil when a Liberal senator, Hubert Sparrow of Saskatchewan, sided with Conservatives to defeat the Personal Development bill at its first reading. The bill would have limited the right of disavowal to use Ottawa, over a 1992 council-fund of a deal by the provinces. The government to privatize Toronto's Lester B. Pearson International Airport. It marked the second time that the Senate had deflected such legislation, first introduced in 1994 after the Pearson Development Corp. launched a \$500-million lawsuit against Ottawa for revenues allegedly lost as a result of the airport's closure. Liberal sources say the government is now considering other options, including ensuring a safe majority in the Senate—which currently has 21 Liberal, 50 Tory and three independent senators—by creating more seats and asking party supporters, prior to introducing the new bill.

## Assisted-suicide charge

It was believed to be the first such case in Canada, a Toronto doctor has been charged with aiding an AIDS patient to commit suicide. Dr. Maurice Grynberg, 48, a general practitioner who specializes in treating people with AIDS, allegedly aided in the April 11 death of Aaron McGinn, 31, who tested HIV positive in 1990 but who had yet to develop full-blown AIDS symptoms. Grynberg was fined \$1,800 bail and allowed to continue his medical practice with the restriction that he not prescribe drugs. The case is doubly controversial because McGinn, according to friends, was psychologically troubled but still in relatively good physical condition.

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Dr. Grynberg specialist in AIDS treatment



Yeltsin on the sidelines:  
His ally Putin is seen here  
in a new role of disunity

# A Kremlin 'coup'

**T**alk of civil war. Reports of troop movements. High-level dissensions. Charges of a thwarted coup in the Kremlin. That was Moscow last week—just when everything was supposed to be going smoothly in the protected cocoon of choosing a new president. To be sure, Boris Yeltsin did win the first round of the presidential election, defeating ahead of Communist rival Gennady Zyuganov by three percentage points—35 to 30—in a 10-state pilot race. And the two will now go head-to-head in a runoff scheduled for July 3. But Yeltsin's first-stage triumph was quickly overshadowed by a struggle for power and influence among his closest advisers that ended in an old-blooded purge. Apart from everything else, the dissension at the highest levels of government again exposed the shallow roots of democracy in Russia.

The unexpected drama began with the surprise arrival of Alexander Lebed, a widely popular former general who finished third, at 15 per cent, in the June 16 balloting. In a bold bid to strengthen his advantage over the Communists, Yeltsin persuaded the 46-year-old ex-paratrooper to join his government as a national security czar. "We ready to start tomorrow," Lebed responded, and listed his priorities as "establishing a coalition order in the country, reforming the armed services and crushing crime."

But so one thought Lebed's new honors would start work so soon and so close to the center of authority. For his opening act, the gravel-voiced former boxer got Yeltsin to the unpopular Do-

stov Minister Pavel Grachev, Lebed's longtime rival. The general followed that up by sacking with a liberal cast of Yeltsin reformers and announcing the sudden dismissal of three powerful Kremlin hardliners. According to Yeltsin aide and pro-reform spokesman Anatoly Chubais, Lebed had swayed a police coup by advisers who wanted to cancel the second round of elections and keep Yeltsin in power as a figurehead. Biding the outcome as a victory for democracy, Chubais declared: "Lebed's appointment is the last nail in the coffin of communism. And the dissidents buried those that a military coup is possible in Russia."

The moves were also political restatements that signaled to signal a remarkable new partnership in Russia. Earlier, Yeltsin had welcomed Lebed to the Kremlin by announcing that he regarded the general as his likely successor. The desires of the two men have been intertwined

since a failed coup in Moscow in August, 1991. As the commander of an elite airborne division, Lebed provided Yeltsin with the military muscle he needed to rally Russians against hardline Communists. In Moldova the following year, Lebed became a Russian national hero by intervening in a bloody civil war between Slav separatists and ethnic Moldovians. He sided with the Slavs and imposed a shaky but lasting peace in the region. Since then, the 46-year-old Yeltsin has indulgently tolerated criticism from a man who could be a younger version of himself—a burly, bass-voiced populist with a habit of defying authority.

Last week, Lebed again threw in his lot with Yeltsin—and quickly consolidated a position as one of the most powerful men in Russia. He first rejected out-of-hand offers of posts in a Zyuganov administration. Equipped Lebed: "I was living two lives—one old one that has shed skin of blood and the new one, which is being replaced very badly at the moment but has a future. I chose the new one." After that boost to Yeltsin's re-election hopes, the new security chief tactically muted his outspoken criticism of NATO's expansion plans in eastern Europe, which he had once said could lead to a "Third World War." Now, he said, NATO was welcome to expand, since "we will assistance to the whole world that we are not fighting anyone any more."

Lebed then acted against ensuring the loyalty of the army—in sensational fashion. On June 18, he accused five generals of plotting a coup to keep Grachev in office. When Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin bluntly described the coup reports as nonsense, Lebed noted down his remarks. According to his revised version, the generals had put troops on alert in an attempt to pressure Yeltsin into returning the dismissed defense minister. "I believe that they will now have to resign," he said. Commented one Western military attaché in Moscow: "There wasn't any coup. This was just Lebed's way of neutralizing Grachev's influence. Quite bit effective."

That was only the start of Lebed's housecleaning in an intricate

proponent who headed Russia's controversial privatization program. The men who held these opposing viewpoints counted equally in the inner circle, yoked together only by their shared loyalty to Yeltsin. The fallout was reached at 5 p.m. on June 18, when Kharshin ordered the arrest of two campaign aides from the anti-coup camp on suspicion of stealing nearly \$700,000. When he learned about the incident that evening, Chubais said, he immediately contacted Lebed and asked him to take control of the security service's communications, neutralizing Kharshin.

During the course of the sleepless night, the economist and the former paratrooper worked the phones—calling Chernomyrdin among others—and managed to gain the release of the two detained aides. Then, they approached Yeltsin and outlined a startling plot. Sorokin had ordered the arrests as the first stage of a plan to disrupt the elections. Surprisingly enough, Yeltsin accepted Chubais's version of events and promptly fired his aides for co-opting their authority. That kind of swift, dramatic act is a Yeltsin trademark, when circumstances warrant change, he ruthlessly discards aides as casually as other men change shirts. Chubais himself has firsthand experience of the Yeltsin chop. When pro-government candidates fared badly in December's parliamentary elections, Yeltsin blamed it on discontent with privatization, singled out Chubais and dumped him from the cabinet.

Now, in a move that seems destined to be back-reformers who deserted him over such hardline policies as the war in Chechnya, Yeltsin has swung back to the liberals. But while Chubais did his best to portray the Kremlin showdown as a win for reform, Yeltsin's opponent in the runoff painted an administration in total disarray. Wanted Zyuganov: "This firm may still be able to do something at the second round."

Zyuganov's chairmen, however, most of the first round also began sacking support to Yeltsin. Seydakov Frolov, a wealthy eye surgeon who gained less than one per cent, personally endorsed the president. Fourth-place insider Gregory Yavlinsky, a strong reformer who managed



Security czar (above) Communist Zyuganov (right) as one thought the new drama would start work as soon and so close to the center of power

riddled Kremlin, where conservatives and reformers have fought for the past two years to influence Yeltsin. Alexander Korotkikh, a personal bodyguard who commanded the 40,000-member presidential security service, was one of the so-called hawks. Aligned with Yeltsin's longtime fishing and drinking pal were first vice-premier Dmitry Sukhomarov, a man with strong ties to Russia's vast military-industrial complex, and Mikhail Bursakov, head of the successor spy agency to the KGB. With Grachev, they were key members of the so-called party of big-sabers who prompted Yeltsin to expand the unpopular conflict against separatists in Chechnya, which Lebed has long opposed. They also wanted Yeltsin to avoid the uncertainty of an election by pulling it off and thereby and bringing a government of national unity.

But Yeltsin insisted on going ahead with the voting. He underlined his choice by bringing in reformist Chubais to replace Sukhomarov as campaign director. Unlike Sukhomarov, who favors consolidating Russia's troubled industries, Chubais is a free-market

seven per cent, asked his supporters not to vote Communist. Ultraconservative Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, who came in a disappointed fifth with 5.7 per cent, and his followers would not support Zyuganov under any circumstances.

"They are my friends and they will vote the way I tell them," he added in characteristic style. Keeping true was Yeltsin's old rival Mikhail Gorbachev, who won less than half a per cent. In any case, complained Zyuganov, "in elections there is no such thing as a free lunch. But his solution did not sound like the proposal of a man confident of victory he called for a coalition government."

The triumphant reformer had his other idea. During the course of a few late hours, they created an unpopular edict and showed off to a man more than ready to meet any challenge to his authority. "This error was in the election," Yeltsin said in 1996, once he and Yeltsin's clash with parliament in October, 1993, and Andrei Ponomarev, a political analyst at the independent Centre for Strategic Studies in Moscow. With praise for their victory flowing from a wide spectrum of democrats and nationalists, the unlikely duo of Chubais and Lebed are confident that they have engineered another win at the polls for Boris Yeltsin. □



ON COLLUSION GUY IN MOSCOW



# And now, 'Filegate'

Bill and Hillary Clinton are leading one of two. They will get away for a while from a tide of troubles over ethics that threaten to undermine Clinton's presidency. With Washington in uproar over past and recent precedents—how or where—the Clintons are off to France for this week's Group of Seven summit. The First Lady, the target of dark denunciations last week by Senate Republicans, then takes an 11-day tour of Eastern Europe while the President returns home. Meanwhile, some may spare a sympathetic thought for Alvin D'Amato, the conservative Republican from New York who led an exhaustive Senate investigation of the Clintons, namely Hillary, their old Arkansas friends and former White House aides. When D'Amato issued his accusatory final report, other news stole his thunder—namely the exposure that a Clinton aide once pulled FBI files on federal officials, some of them Republicans.

There was an earlier upsurge before his inquiry closed. D'Amato shed revelations of special treatment from a White House aide, who used to gain from his influence, as a 300th stocks deal that netted him \$50,000 in hopes. Critics set that aside D'Amato's blistering critique of Hillary Clinton's conduct over her 1990 and 1998, with an Arkansas trustee's help, while her husband was the state's governor.

Next, the right Democratic on D'Amato's 19-member special Watergate committee issued a summary report that dispassionately appraised the Clintons' financial dealings.

The inquiry dealt with income examined piecemeal for years—from the Clintons' long-term involvement in the Whitewater real estate venture, and lawyer Hillary's work on other Arkansas party donors. Charges that the First Lady may have concealed records at the White House on cards and other contacts. In one typical instance, an Arkansas land deal called Castle Grande, the majesty



D'Amato (left), a Whitewater split



The whiff of scandal will not lift from Bill Clinton's campaign

report states that "it appears that Mrs. Clinton was ignorant of both the relevant law and facts that made the Castle Grande transaction irregular." The Democratic dissent found "no credible evidence" of improper conduct on her part. "The venom with which the majority focuses its attack on Hillary Rodham Clinton is palpable," added the Democratic. "Every act is portrayed in its most sinister light." The split reinforced an impression that D'Amato's inquiry was little more than a 14-month, \$8-million page of partisan politics.

In another jagged angle of the Whitewater affair—a federal inquiry led by Republican lawyer Kenneth Starr—two Arkansas bankers went on trial in Little Rock charged with illegally pumping bank funds into Clinton's 1990 reelection campaign as govern-

nor. Clinton later apologized them to state officials. That trial follows May 36 fraud convictions of two of Clinton's Whitewater partners and the successor as governor, Jim Guy Tucker, who later resigned.

In the new trial, as in the previous one, Clinton is on call for videotaped testimony. And last week, prosecutors named the President's longtime friend, Bruce Lindsey, his 1990 campaign treasurer and now White House adviser, as an uncredited co-conspirator in the bankers' trial. By doing so, the prosecutors aim to make it clear Lindsey had banked with bankers in 1990 as plausible as evidence. But politically, Lindsey's denials that he lends a sinister hand to the bank. The most notorious implicated co-conspirator was Richard Nixon, in the Watergate trials of his associates in the 1970s.

Another Watergate echo, harking to Nixon's political "cover ups," feeds the 170 files case. That view up when Congress found that a White House security aide had obtained sensitive FBI records in late 1993 and early 1994 on 404 people—including about White House counsel of defense chief Billy Dale, who was longtime trouble. Clinton apologized. His staff insisted that the aide had mistakenly used an outdated list of people needing White House security clearance and that the files had never been used. The list of names runs only three A to G. But FBI Director Louis Freeh attacked the "vague and evasive" information. He said the files, which others charged the official story Clinton officials derided the responsible staffer and ordered the FBI to investigate. The White House as well as the Clinton family inquiry and people named in the files talked lawsuit. "It smacks in high heaven," said Bob Dole, the Republican presidential candidate now advancing in the polls. "I remember Watergate."

Analysts turned with relief from the D'Amato inquiry's eagerness to gauge the impact of the FBI files case on the Nov. 5 election. Many conclude that "Filegate" may damage Clinton, even among voters ready to discount his record of character lapses. Others express impatience with the scandal's complex and sprawling nature. Clinton team. Fanned Washington columnist Maureen Dowd in *The New York Times*. "It might turn out to be the first White House in history to be guilty of a coverage and not a crime." □

## World NOTES

### AIR SAFETY CONCERNS

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration grounded the budget airline ValuJet after citing it for 34 safety violations, including problems with landing gear, fuel, engine and safety equipment. Release of the FAA probe of ValuJet, sparked by a May 17 crash in the Florida Everglades that killed 110 people, was accompanied by a shake-up at the agency in which its chief of safety resigned. Officials released command or reports that the U.S. transport department was investigating possible criminal conduct at the FAA, including fraud and loss of oversight of ValuJet.

### MAAD COW CRISIS ENDS

At a European Union summit in Florence, Italy, Britain and its partners agreed to a step-by-step lifting of the EU ban on British beef sales imposed because of "mad cow disease," a fatal cattle ailment linked to a deadly human brain disease. In turn, London will stop its non-cooperation policy, under which it valued 100 EU countries at recent weeks. To end the ban, Britain must destroy all cattle born before 1989 and another 130,000 high-risk animals born in 1989 or later.

### BLAMING CUBA

A UN report to be unveiled this week concludes that two US civilian planes were in International waters when Cubans shot them down last February, killing four people. This Montreal-based International Civil Aviation Organization also said Egyptian jets failed to warn the U.S. Commerce flew by a Cuban coast group. Havana rejected the report.

### TRADE WAR AVERTED

A major trade battle between China and the U.S. was averted when China agreed to close police compact-card factories and crack down on copyright thieves. Washington thus withdrew its threat to impose 300-percent tariffs on \$3 billion worth of Chinese leather and electronics.

### THE SLAVE TRADE

Two American reporters told they had bought and traded two enslaved boys in Sudan for about \$700 each. The journalists wrote in the *Baltimore Sun* that they were responding in part to Nelson Mandela's plea for Louis Fatah, who had challenged the media to find proof that slavery existed in Sudan, a Muslim country.

## An Arab challenge to Israel

Kings, presidents and prime ministers from across the Middle East gathered in Cairo at the weekend for the first Arab summit since Iraq invaded Kuwait almost six years ago. Leaders from 21 countries—including Iraq, which was not invited—were intent on proposing a united front to respond to the recent election of Israeli's hawkish Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The Arab bloc believes the peace process is threatened by Netanyahu's hawkishness as to trade hard for peace, the basic principle of negotiations that led to peace treaties between Israel and Egypt, the Palestinians and Jordan. In a draft communique, the leaders called for the immediate resumption of Middle East peace talks based on the return of captured Arab prisoners.

In Israel, Netanyahu's newly installed foreign minister urged the Arab leaders not to preclude the new government. "There are no issues in the Israeli government approach. There are a lot of yeses, there are a lot of positives," David Levy told reporters. "The government hasn't even had a week in office—already they judge it. In a speech after swearing in his new cabinet, Netanyahu restated his government's commitment to peace and security and to observing international agreements. Yet the government has not decided whether Israeli troops will pull out of the West Bank town of Hebron, as agreed in 1993. The withdrawal was scheduled to take place last March but was delayed in reaction to a rash of suicide bombings in Israel by Islamic militants. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat said the new government.

To unity Israeli analysts, Netanyahu failed



Egypt's Hosni Mubarak greets Emir of Bahrain's adviser

his first internal Israeli test: changing a cabinet. Netanyahu created a special portfolio for hardliner Ariel Sharon after a revolt by other ministers forced him to come in on his own to block Sharon from cabinet. Similarly, Netanyahu backed down and appointed his Likud rival Dan Meridor as finance minister after Meridor refused to take a lesser post.

## No to Boutros-Ghali

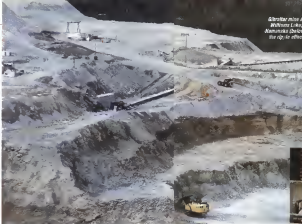
The United States has vowed to veto the appointment of UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to a second five-year term in July of 1997. "The President will not believe it is a very important to put new leadership," said White House spokesman Mike McCurry. President Bill Clinton decided early this year to oppose Boutros-Ghali, a 73-year-old Egyptian, largely because he has failed to find a credible Arab leader to challenge the U.S. proposal that he serve a one-year

term and return in November, 1997, at age 75. "I still hope the United States will change its position. We still have six months until the election," Boutros-Ghali said.

A Foreign Affairs spokesman said Clinton supports Boutros-Ghali's candidacy. But the decision will ultimately be made in the Security Council, where the United States can veto his veto. Among those suggested as alternatives are Irish President Mary Robinson, Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland and Japan's Sadaaki Ogata, the UN high commissioner for refugees.

Executives are nervously pushing new numbers into their calculators at the headquarters of Gibraltor Mines Ltd. in Williams Lake, B.C. The company plans to begin construction of a massive \$220-million copper mine in Chile next month, but even their best estimates of just how much money they will make have been shaken by Taro Yamazaki—the chief copper trader at Tokyo's Sumitomo Corp. On June 13, Sumitomo officials suddenly fired Yamazaki—who is also known as "Mr. Five Per Cent" for the share of the world copper market he once controlled—claiming he had illegally manipulated the copper market for 12 years, losing \$2.4 billion in the largest trading debacle in history. As the scandal spread last week, copper prices tumbled on global markets and regulators around the world began investigating Yamazaki's links to other firms. Gibraltor president Bill Mykura was not optimistic about the outcome: "There is a lot of speculation," he said. "I don't think you can get to the bottom of it."

Yamazaki was a legend in trading circles even before he



Gibraltor mine at Williams Lake, B.C. (above) is the copper effect

## How far will Japan's massive trading scandal spread?

# Sliding copper

self-destructed. The quiet 48-year-old, wearing his trademark brown shoes as he walked with 30 other brokers behind plain metal desks, would say to drive prices up, sell to bring them down, forcing competitors to follow his lead. He was also, it turns out, the best of the brokers. For nearly a decade, Yamazaki's talent can pay rewards to cover his losses, which when the counting is done could top \$4 billion, insiders say. His scheme unravelled when sales records, which were normally diverted to him, somehow reached the rather surprised people in accounting. Yamazaki promptly confessed, leading to a Sumitomo Corp. board decision to fire him. "I deeply apologize for having caused this trouble," said Yamazaki, as he bowed apologetically at a news conference in Tokyo. "I am overwhelmed with shame."

International regulators believe the trading scandal goes beyond Yamazaki. In Washington last week, officials with the U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission said they would explore "any and all relationships" Sumitomo had with other firms dealing in copper. In London, Britain's Serious Fraud Office, which probes complex financial crimes, announced it was investigating the Sumitomo matter after discussion with regulators at the London Metals Exchange, home

to 94 per cent of the world's copper trading. In addition, Britain's top regulatory agency, the Securities and Investment Board, will examine every aspect of the exchange's operation. LME chief executive David King vowed to co-operate: "We will hang them high and publicly."

In Canada, which supplies about 10 per cent of the world's copper, the long-term effect of the collapsing prices was still uncertain. Bruce Reid, an analyst with Yorkton Securities Inc., notes that a number of new copper mines around the world were scheduled to open over the next two years, and the increased production would have forced copper prices down even without the Yamazaki affair. Most Canadian companies had already built those declining prices into their budgets and profit forecasts, says Reid. New York City commodities analysts encouraged clients to sell any shares they have in copper-producing companies well before the Japanese scandal. Share prices of two of Canada's leading nickel producers, Inco and Falconbridge Ltd., both of Toronto, have been dropping since reaching their 1996 highs in late May, although prices last week in both firms rebounded strongly.

There is no doubt that Yamazaki's de-

ception will have a direct impact on Gibraltor's new copper mine in Chile. Construction will still begin next month, but Gibraltor chief financial officer Paul Sweeney says the real cost issue is troubling. "The copper price has made our bankers a little more nervous," adds Sweeney. "There had been an expectation that market prices would ultimately fall. But nobody expected it to happen in such a way."

Regime trading, of course, is nothing new. In December, 1994, Orange County, Calif., declared bankruptcy after revealing that it had lost \$2.3 billion in bonds and derivatives that its treasurer had purchased. In July, 1995, Japan's Daiwa bank disclosed that Tokai-bank's bonds traded at its New York office, lost \$2.3 billion over 12 years selling U.S. government securities. And in perhaps the most sensational loss of all, Nicholas Leeson, a Singapore-based bond trader with the British bank Barings PLC, lost \$1.8 billion, plunging the venerable firm into bankruptcy.

In all the cases, regulators were left trying to answer one simple question: how did the wheeler-dealers get away with it for so long? While there is no definitive answer, there is a common thread running through—some of the top executives at the companies seemed to have safeguards in place that they knew exactly what their employees were doing. And so long as there were healthy profits, no one seemed to care. In fact, Yamazaki was so respected at Sumitomo that many young traders wanted to work with him. And when Yamazaki became president of the firm in 1990, he immediately asked to see him. "I felt relieved," recalled Yamazaki. "Since he was a sincere man contrary to my expectation."

In reality, Mr. Five Per Cent was sincerely crooked. According to Akizawa, Yamazaki kept a private set of books carefully detailing



## Mr. Five Per Cent was a legend in the metal market

trades, claiming that the scandal was an indication of declining corporate morals. Yamazaki's efforts also saw the incident had damaged Japan's reputation abroad. "Global corporations represent the country," stated an editorial in the Tokyo daily newspaper *Yomiuri Shimbun*. "The yamazaki affair shows our business leaders and law management will adversely affect international trust in Japanese corporations."

People who have worked closely with Yamazaki, however, say officials at LME have to shoulder some of the blame because they were worried about his shady deals at most five years ago. In 1991, David Threlkeld, a copper trader who was then based in London, told authorities that Yamazaki had asked him to falsify trading records. Yamazaki was subsequently investigated in what has been known as the "Copper Case" but no evidence was found. Two years later, the

prosecution failed, but the evidence was found. Two years later, the LME pushed his trading again but took no action.

Yamazaki's power was never in question. Earlier this year, rumors that he had lost Sumitomo drove prices down on international markets. And after his conviction, the price of copper tumbled 11 per cent to \$2.2 cents (U.S.) a pound last week. Many commodity traders now believe that they knew exactly what Yamazaki had managed a score of \$200-million of copper at Sumitomo. So the firm decided to sell off its massive holdings, traders fear prices will fall again. Akizawa tried to calm the markets by securing traders that the company had "no immediate plans" to dump its stock. But in the suddenly volatile world of copper trading, no one was taking anything for granted.

TOM PENNELL with SUVENSHANT KAKKACH in Tokyo



Source: Commodity Futures Trading Commission



# The clone crackdown

Golf's big companies fight look-alike clubs

The names would make even a professional wonder blank. There is the Betty, the Buggy and the Bomber. Or how about King Cobra, the Burner Bubble and Big Devil—clashes across from the seemingly generic Berries and greens of golf. In fact, off the course there is a brewing, \$500-million Canada golf equipment industry in which the stakes are high and the competition—especially between designer golf clubs and their less expensive look-alikes—inferno. In stores, clubhouses and course houses across Canada this summer, the corporate giants of golf are fiercely litigating for their turf. And winning.

The key players in the battle are Cobra Golf Canada Inc. and Taylor Made Canada, both of Montreal, and Callaway Golf, which is based in Carlsbad, Calif., but has a distribution arm in Victoria. Their target is the proliferation of cheaper, copycat clubs—drivers and iron sets, like the high-end originals, in Taiwan and China and assembled in North America. Golf's "Big Three" are working together to crack down on knock-offs—even if it means going in with a lawsuit and suing clubs from retail outlets or cloning companies to court. In March,



Coley of Cobra: 'I've got better things to do than chase pirates'

promotes longer drives in what the firm's promotional brochure calls "the continuous quest, a search for the perfect swing." The firm's first-made, top-line and the Buggy Taylor Made, top-line and a black and copper shaft make it easy to spot the \$350 club on the course. Or it would be easy if not for The Tour Made Ruler, which is almost identical in color and shape, and has similar markings and its own Betty shaft. Then there is Tommy Morn's Burner, which also resembles Taylor Made's Burner Bubble and comes complete with the same stylized lettering and red lines. Both the Tour Made Ruler and the Tommy Morn set for about \$150.

And just how good are the copies when it really counts? Far at least one player, Patrick Lamberti, an investment adviser in Toronto who just purchased a set of King Cobra clubs and raves, telling the differ-

ence between those and their clones is no easy task. "If you blindfolded me, I might be able to tell the King Cobra from the King Snake—maybe," says Lamberti. But he has come to believe in the Cobras, which have helped improve his game—and he would be loath to lose that psychological edge. "Golf is such a mind game," he says. "You got what you pay for in life."

Bob Cole, the vice-president of Cobra, says he has been fighting to eliminate pirated clubs since 1984. Cole, who, in Quebec, has even gone to readers' accounts to buy a handful and send clubs off the racks, says the firm's recent court victory over Golf Pro Liquidators affirms that the King Snake club was an infringement of Cobra's trademark and copyright. The court decision also ruled that Cobra's competitors could not use any combination of snake or viper, king or queen, in naming their clubs. But despite such successes, it remains difficult for golf companies to police the thousands of retail outlets that sell sports equipment. "It's very frustrating," says Cole. "I've got better things to do than chase pirates."

As Cobra and Taylor Made have teamed up to sue their Canadian sales agents to report any sightings of look-alike clubs. Once they find them, they send in a team of lawyers headed by Montreal-based firm Sekerian Elliott. "The companies really have taken it up with a vengeance," says Kathryn Chalmers, the lead lawyer along with Ottawa-based Marla Bibic. "They have seen that unless you keep an eye on this, there can be an out of hand. We are constantly sending out cease and desist letters. We're not going to let it slide." Bibic estimates the law firm has sent out more than 60 cease and desist letters and has even sued "undercover" firms to buy look-alike clubs. They all no longer exist, she says, but the look-alike clubs do not match the originals.

Smaller players in the equipment business, however, say the big boys want a virtual monopoly. Chase Clodion, owner of Brampton-based Oltara Golf Inc., a four-person firm that associates its own brand of clubs, says that the companies in the same field—selling electronics and phonorecorders, as it was only a matter of time until they showed up on the golf course. Consistent, Oltara says, want choice and cheaper clubs that look like ones the pros use—but cost considerably less. "It's golf talk," Oltara says. "Doesn't know if the club says Callaway."

DAVID EDSON

Meirre McMurdy



# The Bottom Line

## Banking on change

In the end, it wasn't about business at all. It was about politics. Last week, Ottawa released the long-awaited white paper reviewing financial services legislation. But after two years of study and months of intense lobbying, only one thing is clear: the bank business was the day. And the Liberal government gave them a leg up.

Forget about pushing Canada's chartered banks to evolve into competitive global lenders. Instead, they must wait for at least two years for yet another task force to mediate on the way of bank mergers, entry into auto leasing and other key issues.

Weeks before the paper's release, the wording was on the wall. Doug Peters, secretary of state for financial institutions, who tabled the legislation, intelligently avoided the insurance, auto leasing and banking lobbies for aggressive campaigns that ignored the interests of consumers. Peters explained:

"The groups for taking such a narrow view of the issues that any consensus, say, ability to large meaningful policy changes, was eclipsed. After all, the blame for such a wishy-washy white paper had to be laid somewhere. And the only thing easier than whisking banks is whisking lobbyists."

Unfortunately, the blow for key political groups is quickly running out. Canadian banks are moved in a creative economic case. They are blocked from expanding their reach to new markets like insurance and mortgage services. And they are being shut out on the international banking circuit.

It's no secret that the traditional, core business of retail deposit-taking and consumer loans is on the slide. Canadian retail banks are being stuck their hands in the bank—they're buying mutual funds. That, in turn, has bumped up the cost of funds for the banks.

On the corporate banking side, technology and sophisticated capital markets have crowded the banks' role as intermediaries. Increasingly, companies in need of financing can get direct access to capital markets and at considerably lower cost. Al-

ternatively, they can turn to a host of innovative, new loan bank lenders like Newcourt Credit Group.

On the international front, Canadian banks are beginning to look like underdogs. In Japan, the recent merger of Mitsubishi Bank and the Bank of Tokyo created the largest bank in the world, a monolith with \$852 billion in assets. In the United States, the combination of Chase Manhattan and Chemical Bank has wrought a bank with assets of \$446 billion.

In stark contrast, the Royal Bank of Canada, the largest Canadian bank, has assets of just \$183 billion. In 1970, it was

among the top 12 banks in the world. Today, it is no longer makes in the top 60. Global companies have global options when it comes to their banking needs. These days, there are too many banks with too much capital chasing too few deals. And the best companies aren't likely to pick the runs of the later as partners.

For a market the size of Canada, there's no question that there is excess capacity and rampant duplication. The merger of a couple of banks would significantly lower administrative costs and improve economies of scale. Of course, it would create an other political quagmire as well. And it would also encourage the negative public perception that Canadian banks are increasing banks.

It wasn't a great surprise that the banks were banned from the auto leasing business in last week's white paper. It's perhaps less surprising that they're being shut out of the Big Three or consumer electronics. Especially when there's a whiff of election bitterness in the safety savings air. The Big Three dominate the \$9-billion-a-year auto leasing market. Furthermore, they are the largest employers in Canada and they have massive ties.

If the object of the exercise truly was to better serve domestic consumers, the white paper would have been a more concrete action plan. And it would not have deferred some of the changes—such as bank mergers—that must inevitably reshape the financial services sector.

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## DIAMOND MINE CLEARED

A federal environmental review panel has endorsed a controversial \$660-million diamond-mining project in the Northwest Territories. The proposal by BHP Diamonds Inc. has the potential to provide significant benefits to the North and northwestern, the panel concluded. The decision is subject to federal cabinet approval.

## RADIO MEGALOPOLIS

Ameco's biggest radio broadcaster, Westinghouse Electric Corp., is paying \$5.1 billion for Infinity Broadcasting Corp. The purchase gives Westinghouse control of 63 radio stations. Westinghouse paid \$6.4 billion for CBS earlier this year.

## CANADA FIRST

Canada will likely outperform all other major industrial countries next year, according to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. In 1992, the OECD says the Canadian economy will grow by 2.4 per cent, well above the average 2.3-per-cent growth predicted for the other G-7 countries.

## WEST SALE APPROVED

The U.S. government has approved Thomson Corp.'s \$4.7-billion purchase of West Publishing Co. of St. Paul, Minn., but only if the Canadian firm sells about 50 of West's publications, mostly legal journals. Thomson has been selling off newspapers to concentrate on business databases and newsletters.

## LAWLAW REVISES BID

Lawliffe Inc. has restructured its bid for Scott's Hoaginsky Inc., which includes 480 Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets and 6,000 school lunches. The change came after Prime Minister Mulroney said to stop Lawliffe from selling KFC to A & W Food Services of Canada Inc. The deal will create a separate company for KFC while giving Lawliffe nearly a quarter of Ontario's school bus market.

## LOWEN EXPANDS

The Lawren Group Inc. of Burnaby, B.C., is teaming up with a U.S. investment bank to buy the largest privately owned funeral home operator in North America. Lowen and the Blackstone Group of New York City will pay \$395 million for Prime Succession Inc. of Chicago. Lowen is North America's second-largest funeral company.



Peres: 'expecting a big chunk of money'

## The promoter hits hard times

Murray Peres, the colorful but ailing Vancouver-based mining stock promoter, is in financial trouble again. The 50-year-old businessman, who suffered a similar last year, confessed he could not come up with enough cash to pay for millions of

shares he purchased as Prime Equities International Corp., a company he controls. "I was expecting a big chunk of money that didn't come in," Peres said last week from his home in Scottsdale, Ariz. Insider trading reports show that Peres sold about 990,000 shares of Prime Equities during April and May but bought 1.7 million, increasing his holdings in the company by 800,000 shares. He also recently bought a large block of the controversial mining stock, Cartwright Resources Ltd.—a 1980 penny stock that skyrocketed to \$23 in May before crashing to the \$2 range last week.

The "Pete," a former owner of the Canadian Football League's B.C. Lions, said Cartwright was not a factor in his recent financial difficulties, even though some reports suggest he lost more than \$5 million on the Cartwright play. Peres, which Peres founded in 1980, owns an array of 22 firms, many of them little-known mining companies. Peres's share price has been in a free fall lately, sliding to last week's close of \$2.18 from a high of just under \$5 a few weeks ago. Peres, meanwhile, continues to be plagued by ill health. Last summer, he was hospitalized. A Vancouver-area physician, briefly took over the day-to-day management of the company, but Murray Peres returned to the helm a few weeks later. More recently, he had planned to throw himself a gala party in Las Vegas, Nev., over the June 15 weekend. He cancelled it at the last minute due to medical problems.

## Confrontation over Cuba

Cuba is a pining for U.S. aid to fight a U.S. bid that threatens to curtail Canada's exports to Cuba. The two countries have launched a complaint under the North

American Free Trade Agreement against the Helms-Burton Act, a controversial bill that would allow U.S. residents to sue companies in Congress that is determined to ban the U.S. embargo against Cuba. The act, which received presidential approval in March, allows investigation to pay losses to U.S. citizens and their family assets in the United States if they have invested in property

owned by Americans in the line of the 1958 Cuban revolution. Last week, the Canadian government was contacted by protesters in its own law that would allow firms to continue and recover any damages caused by the U.S. actions. Many countries, including Canada, have expressed their disapproval of the U.S. attempt to set policy for other countries.

## A piece of the sports action

A Toronto businessman who has been pursuing a major league sports franchise for three decades has purchased a stake in Maple Leaf Gardens Ltd. Construction company Larry Tanenbaum paid \$10 million for a 12.5-per-cent stake in the



Maple Leaf Gardens: chairman a franchisee

## The Nation's Business

# Peter C. Newman

## A revolutionary twist on Indian statehood

Last week's First Nations' conference in Ottawa was haunted by three unwanted guests. There was Pierre Trudeau, the chairman of the Canadian Opera, who originally denounced the whole cry of constitutional protest, leaving it to provincial elites that guaranteed failure. There, too, was Brian Mulroney, who must have spoiled the discussions by personifying the idea of a political career sacrificed on the cross of constitutional reform. But the latest absence was Omer Mercier, once so influential that he attended the gatherings and helped to hammer together the Charlottetown accord. He has since been reduced to a player, not a player, the conference goes to wide places and about for attention. An unheard voice in the wind.

Trudeau and Mulroney were otherwise occupied, but the leader of the Assembly of First Nations exploited his exclusion by staging a Force 101 bomber action. "I've got this out, then obviously partnership is not," Mercier bitterly complained before the meeting began. "Our option now is to pursue sovereignty, complete with limits or Palestinian-style demands for territory."

The Assembly of First Nations leader did not sell out how he intends to turn his followers into Star Wars or the Palestine Liberation Organization, but has not accurately echoed the mounting frustration of Canada's aboriginal community. The most creative response came from Joe Dion, a hereditary chief of the Cree Nation. "Mercier is not just an extreme point of view that won't fly but he dug to the position that we are sovereign," Dion told me last week. "That's why I'm advocating an alternate form of Indian statehood that would allow us to reach a form of sovereignty based on the basis of what's doable and what's not."

Dion, 45, advocates a revolutionary constitutional amendment that would recognize the aboriginal people and their scattered reserves into the equivalent of a new Canadian province—still an integral part of the country, but with specific and overarching powers of self-government.

A persuasive virtue for his cause, Dion has significant credibility in his own community. He headed the 1977 delegation that met the Queen at Buckingham Palace to seek redress on certain treaty issues, and acted as constitutional co-ordinator for the National Indian Brotherhood during the 1980-1982 pan-Indian talks. More recently, he has led the fight by 189 Canadian nation communities for control over their oil and gas resources. Dion has already signed two agreements with the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, guaranteeing new approaches to land management by the industry. Just this week, he is attending a chiefs' summit in Edmonton, which will formalize his long-standing strategy to force the federal government to transfer local oil and mineral rights to native hands.

"On a national scale, we simply can't be effective with 576 band governments instead of one collective First Nations parliament," Dion insists. "We would command a land mass equivalent to Nova Scotia and a population of about half a million. It's the only way aboriginal and treaty rights can be extended and our long-term survival can be ensured."

The notion of unifying Indians under the umbrella of a nationwide province isn't new, but Dion asked to make it the dominant issue among aboriginal demands. The first proposed the idea at a First Nations conference in 1982, but was shot down for trying to go too far too fast. It's a sign of how militant the aboriginal leaders have become that Dion's cause opposition saw a first death who argue he isn't going far enough.

To the extent that Indian sovereignty implies a political, fiscal, economic and geographic separation from Canada, there is not a subtle package," stresses one of Dion's private strategy papers. "If pressed, this position can challenge our present public support and destroy our credibility. Statehood, on the other hand, is a feasible and desirable option because it recognizes our inherent sovereignty in existing constitutional terms and offers a legitimate basis for Indian nation to exercise control over their affairs."

Just because he doesn't fear Mercier's threats doesn't make Dion less sincere. He interprets the actual Confederation in 1867 as recognizing the sovereignties of Ontario, Quebec and the former Maritime colonies, but adds that the Indian nations were placed under the control of a benevolent empire with assimilating their people and separating them from their lands. Dion argues that there are three regions—the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Indian territories—that deserve full-blown provincial status. "Unlike other provinces," he says, "the Indian states would enjoy special language and cultural rights, sovereignty along the lines granted French Canadians, as well as special hunting, fishing and trapping provisions."

Dion visualizes the new Indian province as having 12 seats in the Commons, with its own lieutenant-governor (a tribal elder), a legislature (probably an Indian) with a council of elders serving as its upper house, and its own civil service. It is vague about extracting additional payments from Ottawa, to make up for Indian resources and lands "lost to the First Nations as a result of earlier actions in the past."

Joe Dion may be dreaming in sepia, but he is a true believer and will soon get into active politics. "I won't run for Mercier's job," he says, "because the Assembly of First Nations is an outfit that's had its day. It's not really accepted by the people, who see it more as a check-off organization. Perhaps the only sensible thing would be for us to field our own political party. At the moment, we have a political vacuum, with Mercier out there walking around in a buckskin jacket, signing meaningless agreements."

BY MARCI McDONALD

During the busy Victorian railfairs, the tables had been laid as usual with white damask. The Wilensky & Bloch chandeliers gleamed in the sunlight streaming through the ancient casements of Bugeo, one of Toronto's most elegant restaurants. But amid banquets graciously graced by John Turner and Ontario Lt.-Gov. Hal Jackson, a cadre of black-and-white waiters laid the silver for a decidedly different crowd. At 50, Bruce Vinick, a man who had spent four decades catering to royalty and the rich, was throwing his doors open to 100 of the city's homeless. For years, he had watched their numbers grow—huddling down in layered coats on the park benches across the street or snuggling to sleep in at the forbidden spaces, their backs pressed against the glass. Often, his patrons had to sleep around the bus-ramp footcots on the pavement on the way to their homes. Upown, at his former location, Vinick had never witnessed such misery. But now, he confronted it daily, at night, it haunted his dreams. "A simple man like me—what can I do to help society?"

*Canadians, shocked into the realization that poverty's address is in their own backyards, are reaching out to make a difference*



Vinick (right) with chef John Wilensky at Bugeo's. MacGowan is her chef-de-pastry, helping the homeless, the poor.



Development costed out their efforts at nearly \$60 billion. Nine years later, experts confirm their ranks are swelling, substantiated in part by the increasingly palpable need. "There's no question about it," says Pauley Downes, executive director of Volunteer Canada, an Ottawa-based clearing house. "We're at the beginning of a wave of enthusiasm for solutions—this is the upside of all this. People want to make a difference and they're reaching into their pocketbooks and timebanks."

Singly and in classrooms or corporate teams, they are meeting together to give the lie to the mounting fear that Canada has ceased to be a generous nation. But where once the richels and doles as the school or used to be designated for their coffers, now Canadians have been shocked into the realization that poverty's address is right in their own backyards. "We looked abroad because we assumed the problems here were relatively minor," says Tim Brothwell, former executive director of InterPac, an international development agency, who now heads The J. W. McConnell Family Foundation in Montreal. "These days, we're conscious that our problems are pretty remarkable."

Last year, the United Way registered a record 3.6 per cent increase in donations across Canada. But Rob Downes of Toronto's Ardencliffe, the continent's leading independent for nonprofit institutions, reports that more than three-quarters of his fundraising campaigns were up by 15 per cent. The newest donors are baby boomers or those in low-income neighborhoods. "The heart is there—I would say it's better than

# LOCAL HEROES

he says. "I can't create 100 jobs. But you can't close your eyes."

On a winter Sunday with a homicidal chill factor, his wife and three grown children joined him as their guests parked shopping carts at the doorway to venture warmly inside. Some had spent up for the occasion, others nursed black eyes. A guitar played in the chef kicked out bowls of morning links and potato soup, arctic plates of turkey and, for dessert, affogato tiramisu, all served with the same courtly gravity accorded the pillars of the Establishment. "You should have seen the looks on their faces," Vinick marvels.

He had wanted to dispense "a day of joy," as he puts it. But later, he realized that he had found that joy within himself. Over the months that followed, a gain observed. Each Friday, he brought dinner to the Dal at the Gold pavilion in the parish hall of St. Michael's Cathedral, one of 30 churches that rolled through the worst winter months to shelter 600 of the city's 600 homeless. But three men still froze to death on the street. Once, a newspaper photographer had snapped Vinick as an arson at the church steam boilers, but he declined to identify himself. "I don't do it to get my name in the paper," he says. "I care these people something because I've been homeless."

Now, on a breezy summer's afternoon, only the weather has improved. As the daytime still gathers among the gardens across King Street, he is already planning some grand anniversary at

his patrons to underwrite an expanded meal service next winter. His gesture, he knows, is but a Band-Aid on the gaping wounds of society as the chosen years ever wider between the country's rich and poor. But at a time when all the news often seems to be bad news—where the nation's center no longer seems to be holding—and government and corporate elites are retreating the civil fabric—Vinick and thousands of other Canadians are stepping forward to act out, in various ways, the age-old admonition, better to light a candle than curse the darkness.

For some, it is an act of defiance—a protest against the ideology that they see as smothering human dignity on the altar of order and provincial balance sheets. For others, it is a return to the way they believe things used to be when communities looked after their own without any middle-class government bureaucracy. But whatever the motivation, whether by design or default, citizens across the country are taking up their sleeves and stepping into the breach. In unreported numbers, they are donating their time and money, reaching out to those abandoned by slashed charity and social service budgets or lacking innovative ways to rebuild their neighborhoods from the grassroots.

No one has bothered to measure their strength since a 1987 Statistics Canada survey estimated the country's volunteer force at 13 million. At the time, the Canadian Council on Social

er," he notes. "It's scary people are responding with little notes saying they're not employed and all most apologizing for not giving more. There's a sense of 'Them, but for the grace of God, go I'."

The face of volunteerism, too, is changing. A premise once thought to be the monopoly of middle-class housewives is increasingly popular: played—both often desperate for job skills. "You are a lot of young people using volunteerism to build their resumes," says Penelope Ross, executive director of Newfoundland's Community Services Council. New Canadians are joining in as well. In Alberta, the province with the highest volunteer rate, Joyce MacAlpine, a 53-year-old mother of five from Trinidad, retired after 38 years as a supply supervisor at a Calgary hospital and promptly opened a Thrift shop whose proceeds are devoted to sending students to college. In only one year, she had donated clothing and housewares. MacAlpine has already sponsored 57,000 in school shoes and berenies at the University of Calgary and two community colleges. Years ago, she explains, a stranger's gift allowed her own daughter to graduate from McGill. "People helped my kids," she says. "Sometimes, all a child needs is a library to get out of the red line."

In modern times, altruism has suddenly become a trendy topic. After years of neglect, economists and social scientists are opening out books and buzzwords, finally giving the voluntary sector as due with titles like "social capital," the "Third Sector" and the "civil society." In mid-June, Jeremy Rifkin, head of Wholeness Foundation on Economic Trends, fired up the annual meeting of Winnipeg's Social Planning Council with his thesis that de-politicalizes a potent new political force around the world. In his grim vision of a future when 80 billion estimates on by an elite 12 per cent of the population may have jobs, he predicts that the sole hope for a meaningful existence—and for restoring the continent's depressing edge—may lie in mobilizing that can-do community spirit. But he acknowledges the irony of the subject's unpolitical cachet: "This sector has always been led by women, and, frankly, that's why we didn't pay enough attention to it," he says. "Then, when men started going to work in the community, we started studying it and using fancy words like 'social capital'."

But the success stories come from politicians—often their engaged in the most drastic assaults on the social safety net. Now is the voluntary community found back in heavily promoted—or added to do so much with so little. "We all of us feel a collective despair," says Bowen. "Volunteers don't have the capacity to pick up everything that the government used to do." Worse, they lack many of the professional skills. Across the country, community activists face a crisis looming: "There's a real line in the voluntary sector that we're finding ourselves left to pick up the pieces," says Newfoundland's Bowen. "We've got to be careful we're not just doing good."

In Ontario, Premier Mike Harris has announced an initiative to promote volunteerism under MPP Julia Macra. But he failed to note that budget had shattered seven provincial volunteer



Grand, Colours Barracks at StreetCity Village for the diversity festival

## A prevailing sense of 'There, but for the grace of God, go I'

centres and may force up to 60 Toronto charities to close. Like others, Anne Gorkes, president of the United Way of Greater Toronto, sees the country caught in two conflicting currents. "On the one hand, the balance is shifting to self-reliance. And there's a real risk it's leading to a kinder society," she says. "But on the other, there is just a huge reservoir of compassion. Wherever I go, people are saying, 'I'd like to help.'"

In that schizophrenia lies a fundamental question—one that, even more than the issue of national unity, may shape the country's future. "We've been with a crisis in Canada right now," says Bowen, "about what kind of society we're going to be."

From the outside, it might be another abandoned warehouse along Toronto's waterfront. Only a number, hand-scrawled on the brick, betrays the fact that inside the former mail and truck depot lurks a unique experimental village for the chronically homeless called StreetCity. Beneath its rooftop skylight, a central alley studded with potted palms and pink benches has been christened Main Street. On either side, colorful garrets crisscross townhouses, each with a dozen furnished rooms—home to 71 single men and women who pay \$205-a-month rent to call that modest hall their own, complete with a key for the door.

With common kitchens and living rooms, StreetCity is an attempt to replicate the rowing houses that lined up when young gentlemen coarsely dowryed neighbours. "We been in and out of every one of the houses in Toronto, and this is the most blessed place," says Johnny Vilgas, 32, who has spent most of his life on the street. "This is my little home." Vilgas was one of the originals when the Fred Victor Mission and assorted social agencies set out to give a group of long-term street people a chance to build and manage their own housing. When welfare officials looked at the initial architect's plan, one denounced it as a "j—g penitentiary." Together, they came up with the current design. Many like Vilgas were hired to help in the construction

and are now renovating a second warehouse. Tenants are hired as maintenance workers and a midtown council gardens residents' complaints—occasionally evicting the latter.

For Bill Grant, StreetCity utilized a haven from which to place back together a shattered life. A former contractor, Grant has his job back in home, when the discs in his back began to disintegrate. Now, after evaluating to a shelter apartment to another affiliated project, he runs StreetCity's kitchen and Grounds Clearing service, leading other tenants back to work. "I'd like to live with this place," he says. "People look out for each other here."

From around the world, low-cost housing experts have hailed StreetCity as one of the most imaginative solutions on the map. But the warehouse took \$2 million in government funds to rebuild. "I got a letter from a concerned citizen asking why we didn't just acquire all the old warehouses and fill them with homeless people," says Paul Dowling, executive director of Human First Society, the nonprofit agency that oversees the project. "Well, it takes a lot of money to make these things happen."

Dowling argues that every citizen's fundamental right to a roof has long been part of the unwritten promise that Canadians living with their governments. But as governments pull out of the public housing business, StreetCity may become a casualty. Scrambling for replacement funding, Dowling launched the pro-

Bill Grant at the Andrew Street Fair, looking after their own



ject's first direct road campaign in May, but he knows it will be a hard sell. Plugging in at soup kitchens is more likely to tug at public heart—and purse—strings. "It's the kind of thing you can point to that proves people do care," he says. "But it doesn't deal with the root problem."

Like the country's 74,000 other registered charities, StreetCity is now increasingly dependent upon the whims of private foundations and corporations—a cash pool that Patrick Johnston, president of the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy, refers to as a "paleo" "watering hole." In 1993, out of \$36 billion in charitable revenues, only 12 per cent came from that pool, nearly 57 per cent came from government. "As governments cut back, that money is not going to be replaced," Johnston points out. "The welfare bill has shrunk, and so the amounts come down, they're all crying each other's misery." Agnes Judith Maxwell, president of Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc. in Ottawa, "The competition for funds is just desperate out there."

Already, some charities have been forced to follow the corpo-

rate fashion, downsizing and pooling resources. In Alberta, three organizations merged to become the Big Sister and Big Brothers of Calgary. A year later, the officers reported a budget surplus—and a saving of \$23,000 on rent alone. But contrary to conventional wisdom, most have little left to spare: nearly half of all charities do not a single paid employee. Instead, programs are being trimmed or thrown out. "Every organization is cutting back," says Maxwell. "And some are retreating so much I call it how-do-you-find-these-people-salary-very-carefully. A lot of private work is not getting done."

Ironically, many of those least enthusiastic about the results once called leaders for governments to whittle social spending. Suddenly, corporate Canada finds itself bitterly being told by politicians to make up the shortfall. According to the Centre for Philanthropy's projections, private foundations would have to come up with \$6 for every lost government \$1. "It's simply unrealistic," says Johnston. "Anyone in government who says the private sector should pick up the slack is either incredibly naive or he's misreading the demand."

Still, to the discomfiture of some in the country's boardrooms, the public appears unlikely to buy these arguments. As a 1993 survey revealed, Canadians are under the strongest impression that corporations owe up to 30 per cent of charitable donations—not their actual one per cent—and expect them to shoulder 38 per cent in the future. Says Martin Cassell, a Toronto philanthropist who is one of the country's leading philanthropists: "Some corporations are receiving 1,000 applications a month for support. They're saying, 'We're being begged.'"

With business donations already at the \$900-million mark, Cassell predicts that the country is fast approaching corporate donor fatigue. Instead, more companies are choosing to hand over goods and underwrite their employees' volunteer efforts. Human Canada Inc. is doing both in the past three years, its donations have exceeded 45 times in Meals on Wheels programs from British Columbia to Nova Scotia. The Centre for Philanthropy has encouraged corporate citizenship by leading businesses that donate one per cent of their profits to charity. And this spring is a paleo Toronto company. It handed out its first Insight awards to five "corporate citizens" that had devised a creative solution to a pressing community need.

That much corporate citizenship is not enough, says Cassell. "It's not a philanthropic endeavor any more," says lead researcher Bob Brown. "It's a marketing effort—what companies are calling social marketing." Those calculations have to get the most bang for charitable bucks may leave some causes out in the cold. "Corporations will pick and choose the easy issues—toddler bears and children's hospitals," says Paddy Brown. "They're not going to fund the hard stuff."

Still, Cassell sees no need for despair. "We're in the first wave of a 10-year cycle," he says. "It's going to take time before we can sort it all out. But I see a lot of people rising to the occasion."

How are they rising? And what new prescriptions are they prescribing to cure the ills that have defied decades of public discomfit? What, in short, is the future of the voluntary sector in the heart of the current charged debate. And, on a summer night last year, it hovered over Winnipeg's Aboriginal Centre, where John McKnight, one of the most controversial gurus of neighborhood

# Convincing the fact of corporate donor list

activities, was denouncing the con-  
tributions of modern social work.  
A 69-year-old self-styled "urban  
philosopher" and director of Com-  
munity Studies at Northwestern  
University in Evanston, IL,  
McKnight was fixating what he  
called the "caring professions"  
for nurturing the very helplessness  
they were asked to wipe  
out. He called for toppling nobel  
institutions and letting neigh-  
borhoods solve their own prob-  
lems based on their strengths, not  
their weaknesses. In his address,  
Jesse Hill, the coordinator of the  
city's Andrews Street Fes-  
tival, chuckled to himself.  
"He stole our ideas!"

A year earlier, the citizenry of  
Winthrop's poorest neighbor-  
hood—a long-neglected North End stretch—had as-  
sembled with a plan. Despite social agreement  
constantly taking the canonical pound, the largely  
abandoned population still had no jobs or hope, nor  
a landmark. "People around here are always told  
they can't do anything," says Hill, a 45-year-old  
former Manitoba bureaucrat, who grew up in the area.  
"We wanted to look more at the positive stuff."

During next local residents to survey the area's assets, they  
discovered 325 guitar players—and an unexpected wedding of  
some 400 of the 700 respondents volunteered to help out.  
The result is a family centre that celebrated its first anniversary  
with a street fair in mid-June. Graced atop an existing drop-

in centre, Andrews Street targets the  
area's unmet needs: troubled mothers  
and children under six. In its commu-  
nity kitchen, women can stretch their  
food dollars by whipping up huge din-  
ners together. And a neighborhood  
patrol escorts kids past cars cruising  
for prostitutes nearby. "When a kid is  
lost," says Hill, "we had him before  
the police does."

Like other community projects spring-  
ing to life across the country, Andrews  
Street is being touted as proof of the  
latest fad in social planning—let-  
ting neighborhoods hammer out their  
own solutions that don't stink in hardy  
new Canadian lingo and workers  
learned the same lesson working at the  
Tijds World. "This is the debate we  
had 30 years ago in international develop-  
ment circles," says Tim Broadhead.  
"Now, it's happening here."

Suddenly, grassroots activism is  
catching fire across the country.  
Community foundations, first created  
in 1954 to fund requests in the towns  
that helped make their donors rich, are  
back in style—the latest grow-  
ing philanthropies on the coast.  
Thirteen of the country's 72 foun-  
dations—with assets of \$630 mil-



## Canadians are pitching in to reweave the national fabric

emerged over the past year and are now helping out many local  
sympathies and resources.

Revealing community loss funds—ethical neighborhood banks  
that dole out a few thousand dollars to high-risk would-be entrepre-  
neurs—have also mushroomed since the first one set up shop in a  
second-floor Montreal apartment six years ago. Borrowed from a  
notion pioneered among peasants in Poland, 200 have blossomed  
in Quebec alone. "All of a sudden," says Marguerite Mendel, head of  
the School of Community and Public Affairs at Concordia University, "the  
issue is hot."

Hot too are community economic  
development corporations—non-  
profit initiatives designed to meet a  
local need and yet earn enough  
back to stay self-sufficient. Blurring  
the line between business and char-  
ity, they were born in the United  
States during the 1980s. A decade  
later, a Catholic priest named Urs  
MacLennan imported the concept to  
Canada, founding New Dawn  
Enterprises in Sydney, N.S. Today,  
it runs 10 Cape Breton enterprises,  
including ground-breaking services  
for the region's rapidly growing  
population. "When New Dawn started,  
no one could figure out what  
the hell we were," says president  
Rudolf MacLennan. "Some people  
thought we were a bunch of blind-  
ing-heart communists. But we seem  
to spend less and less time explain-  
ing ourselves."

Louis, Burkhardt at the At You Like  
It Café: novel employment

## THE VOLUNTEER HIGHWAY

The telephone remains the most popular way of getting in touch  
with volunteer agencies. But the World Wide Web is now provid-  
ing an easy path to hooking up and helping out. "It's my guess that  
10 years from now it will be the major way we do business," says  
Paddy Bowen, executive director of Volunteer Canada. In fact, Frank  
Hart-Russell, 67, of Duran, B.C., has already gone on-line to find a  
new job. He offered his services to the Canadian Valley Volunteer Society  
after seeing a posting for volunteers on its Internet home page  
(<http://www.valleylink.net/~volunteer/val.htm>). The retired editor of  
the Canadian Leader newspaper now drives senior citizens to ap-  
pointments about three times a week. Says Hart-Russell: "Somebody I may  
need help and I hope there will be someone there for me."

Among the first to develop home pages have been such national  
associations as Elderly Canada ([www.elderly.ca](http://www.elderly.ca)), the  
and the Breast Cancer Society of Canada (<http://www.breastcancer.ca>).  
But now, a tiny number of local and regional or-  
ganizations are moving online: from the Timmers  
Volunteer Centre in Northern Ontario (<http://www.timmersvolunteer.ca>)  
to the Manitoba Hospice Foundation (<http://www.mhospice.ca>). "It's quite arbi-  
trary at the moment," says Bowen. "But the po-  
tential is massive." And as more Canadians hook  
up to the Web, nonprofit organizations are hop-  
ing to lure a new generation of volunteers. Says  
Dale Gifford, executive director of Volunteer  
Vancouver: "Part of our rationale for having a  
home page is to attract younger people."

It may also help attract new revenue. Bowen: "It convinced  
me it will be able to attract advertisers in Volunteer Canada's  
Web site, currently under construction. There are mil-  
lions of people who volunteer in Canada," says Bowen. "If we  
can prove that people are using our site, we can go  
to corporate sponsors and say, 'Look at the potential.'"

For those who depend on volunteer organizations, the  
Internet is also making life easier. "So many people are isolated  
at home," says Esther Armas-Muñoz, executive director of  
A Loving Spoonful (<http://www.loving-spoonful.org>).  
A volunteer agency in Vancouver also provides this  
week in people living with HIV the virus that  
causes AIDS. "Their only connection is through  
the Web." In the past six months, A Loving  
Spoonful's home page, which provides tips about  
healthy living, has been visited about 1,000  
times. A responsible firm for a local special-  
ist organization. "The best part is that it is  
making awareness about nutrition and HIV," says  
Armas-Muñoz. But she is the sole acknowl-  
edge that there have also been some tangible  
benefits for her organization. "I have people who send donations," she  
adds, "who say they live on the Web site."

For those who are non-users, but interested in finding a means to  
volunteer, Bowen suggests calling the following national organizations  
for a list of their affiliates:  
Volunteer Canada: 1-800-673-0401  
Canadian Centre for Philanthropy: 1-800-363-1178  
(<http://www.ccp.ca>)  
United Way of Canada: Canadiana Canada: 1-800-267-8221  
YMCA Canada: 416-465-9447  
Canadian Environmental Network: 613-543-2576  
Canadian Parks and Recreation Association: 613-748-5851  
(<http://www.canrecreation.ca>)  
Canadian Association for Community Care: 613-261-7510  
Community Foundations of Canada: 613-236-1616  
Canadian Confederation of the Arts: 1-800-443-3561  
(<http://www.cca.ca>)

SANDRA FARRAN

In a sprawling southwestern Ontario municipality, Paul Born,  
executive director of Cambridge's Community Opportunities  
Development Association (CODA), has given the concept a dif-  
ferent spin. In an area devastated by plant and textile mil-  
l closures, he has helped transform a former collection of churches  
and unions into a thriving web of job-training centres and small-  
business training. So about 400 enterprise become at dealing  
with job-loss workers that it has no outplacement counselling  
center for most of the southern half of the province.

But another CODA job-training scheme has turned into a po-  
litical minefield. In September, Born collaborated with the  
Kitchener Public Library to turn an unused corner of its base-  
ment into the stylish At You Like It Café, complete with an  
express machine. There, under the guise of a former restau-  
rant manager Steve Lakin, a half-dozen volunteers recruits the  
Kitchener's 200,000 residents, a 27-year-old single mother  
Alma and work experience designed to give them a boost to find  
full-time jobs. At the same time, the library—already reeling  
from \$250,000 in provincial and municipal  
funding cuts—collects eight per cent of the  
take. "We saw it as a service," says the library's  
executive CEO, Peggy Whittle, "but we also  
saw it as a way to make money."

Now, the realization that the café's training  
program may qualify for Ontario's contentious  
workfare policy, aimed at making social as-  
sistance recipients bid for their cheques, has cast  
a cloud over its success. Last December,  
when Born, who has long organized a conference on  
workfare at the library—serving Community  
and Social Services Minister  
David Watson—two of the three  
active members on his board resigned. In  
a bitter protest, a community that came  
together to tackle its unemployment  
was in some divided over the use of  
the solution. Says a rival: "All  
the lines are blurred these days."

Since then, workfare has turned  
the once-placed universe of volun-  
teers upside down. The Ontario  
Council of the Government of Ontario  
of Public Employees has threatened to  
boycott any United Way agency that  
co-operates with the policy—a  
move that could cost charities millions in  
donations. Volunteer organizations lament  
that the controversy could sabotage com-  
munity spirit at a time when it has never  
been more needed. "Workfare is the oppo-  
site of volunteers," laments Paddy Bowen.  
"It's not by choice, it's coerced."

That explosive debate raises questions  
about the future of the volunteer sector  
in a country's troubled state. It also ap-  
pears to themselves born a seemingly bleak fiscal re-  
ality and a growing tradition of public complacency.  
Economist Joliffe Macleod sees it as a choice between an in-  
creasingly jobless country, scarred by economic inequities  
and fear, and what she has dubbed "a realistic society"—one ca-  
pable of coming up with yet unimagined answers to assure the  
confident.

In his half-century study of Italy, called *Making Democracy  
Work*, Robert Putnam, a Harvard professor of government, ar-  
gues that only civic participation guarantees a vibrant—and  
prosperous—society. By that measure, those who fret over the  
uncertain fate of the nation may find themselves reassured.  
Already, at a time when Canadians have never seemed more  
cynical about political leadership, they are picking it up in re-  
newed vigor, neighborhood by neighborhood and city by  
city, in a fabric frayed only by the impulses of the heart. □

# CUTTING BACK

**In the cash-strapped 1990s, government is depending on volunteers to fill the breach**

**L**ong before Paul Martin was first elected to the House of Commons in 1988, he was active in a variety of volunteer activities that ranged from fund-raising for disabled groups to membership in the human rights organization Amnesty International. So when he became finance minister in November 1990, it was only natural, says Martin, that he pushed cabinet colleagues and bureaucrats "to make damn sure they facilitate the work of community groups." One of his first acts was to arrange federal funding for a pilot project to help find jobs for disabled people in Prince Edward Island that had stalled, awaiting government approval for more than two years. And in two of his past three budgets, he

lowered the ceiling at which individuals could claim greater tax deductions from their charitable donations. But despite these efforts, Martin concedes, he is aware of the "one unpalatable reality" that he calls "the deficit abyss."

The deficit abysses everything that we do as a government."

He is not what your country can do for you, but rather what it is prepared to encourage you to do for others. In the cash-strapped 1990s, that is the new mantra of governments at all levels, as reductions in spending and services mean that they depend less on their ability to volunteer to do the work for free that governments once did routinely. "There is no question that governments have to rely on volunteers more than ever as a time of cutbacks, and that makes it absolutely essential that we do all we can to recognize the importance of volunteers," says Martin.

That claim runs counter to a variety of ways. One of the most obvious is a formal recognition of the importance of Canada's volunteers. That is evident in the new *Canada Canada Awards* that



**Martin cutting spending and support to programs when many people need them more than ever**

Gov. Gen. Roméo LeBlanc will present to 12 recipients, one from each province and territory, in Canada Day. In March, Martin took part in a ceremony honoring "outstanding corporate citizens"—companies that work with community organizations to hire people suffering from disabilities. And there are the Canada Volunteer Awards, which Health Minister David Dingwall presented to 24 men and women with long records of service to their communities at a ceremony on June 18. Said Dingwall: "Governments have only spoken up in recent years and started to acknowledge the significant contributions that volunteers make."



But behind such ceremonies and cheery declarations lie sobering truths. Since the Liberals came to power in 1993, they have slashed spending virtually across the board to combat a budget deficit that has grown to nearly \$17 billion. And over the next two years, they will cut about one-third of the \$17 billion they owe to the provinces in the form of annual transfer payments. That means, in turn, that the provinces will trim services and subsidies, as well as the money that they give to municipalities. Since many volunteer groups rely on money from all three levels of government, the effects can be devastating.

Still, many politicians argue that there continues to be a need to lead community organizations. Even in the Reform party, which supports deep cuts in government spending in almost all areas, some say the Liberals should think twice before cutting grants to community groups. Reform MP Keith Martin, a medical doctor who volunteers his services each summer at an emergency clinic in his riding on the western tip of Vancouver Island, describes the present situation for volunteer groups as "a sorry state of affairs." Adds Martin: "The cuts are coming too fast. Stability is needed to plan for the future."

Directly or indirectly, these cuts affect almost all Canadians. One of the great dilemmas is that Canadian governments are cutting spending and support programs precisely at a time when many people need them more than ever. With the onset of new technology and an unemployment rate that has hovered around 10 per cent for most of the decade, an increasing number of Canadians are confronted by career changes, unemployment and the intricacy that these situations bring.

At the same time, the traditional relationship between governments and the country's citizens that Maxine Futschinski calls "the social union"—the web of rights and obligations that the two sides share—is breaking down. In a recent report entitled "Building Bridges for Canada's New Social Union," Maxwell and his colleague Margaret Bagen suggest that the two sides need to jointly establish new definitions of their respective roles as society that, in turn, suggests that individuals and groups take responsibility for some of the tasks previously performed by governments.

Through the years, organizations catering to interest groups



**Maxine Futschinski (right) the web of rights and obligations is breaking down**

and often disadvantaged segments of society have relied on a combination of public and private funds, and volunteer efforts. As a 1989 federal government study of volunteers noted, their activities encompass areas "beyond those traditionally understood by that term (including) activities undertaken without pay for unions, unions in association and voluntary groups." As recently as 1990, the federal government spent an estimated \$200 million a year funding interest groups. No precise figures are available on how much that figure has fallen since then, but federal officials acknowledge that across-the-board cuts have affected virtually all groups. Some of those, such as the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), have controversial and overtly political agendas that on occasion can cut across the wishes and policies of the government. That has led to accusations from some NAC members that the cuts were politically motivated. But government cuts have also directly or indirectly affected nonpartisan causes that include refugee assistance groups, children's and seniors, programs to help immigrants adapt to Canada, and charity groups with religious ties that help the impoverished.

In the late and occasionally racist 1960s, the reality is that almost every facet of society depended at least in part on volunteer

efforts. At Ottawa's city hall, few people who take the popular annual tours of the government realize that the person leading them around is a volunteer. In one park in the city, Georgia Landis, a 73-year-old retired military officer, spends an hour and a half each morning clearing the grounds—a labor of love. He phones the city's recreation department every time repairs are required and it, in turn, provides them. Without him, the park would stay in disrepair because the city cannot afford a supervisor to oversee it. And in Montreal, when the city planned to cut funding at certain times three years ago, residents struck a deal: in exchange for maintaining the 1966, the city kept up the beach, trees the ice and leaves material to maintain the risk. Volunteers now maintain 68 of the city's 174 skating rinks. Those are jobs that used to be the responsibility of paid personnel.

At the other extreme, under Ontario's ambitious and controversial welfare reform, jobs that were once done by volunteers are now being handed to a new group, starting in September, 94,000 solo-headed welfare recipients will begin working for up to 17 hours a week as a condition of qualifying for benefits. Their jobs will range from cleaning parks to cutting grass, leading to the blood to assist at shows. A similar program exists, on a much smaller scale, in Alberta.

Supporters of the plan, led by Ontario Community and Social Services Minister David Tsubouchi, argue that it will both reduce welfare recipients' net debts and restore their sense of pride. But the program also raises questions that affect both those required to work and those they are supposed to serve. Will an elderly person or troubled teen feel comfortable knowing that the person attending to them is only there because they are required to be?

With volunteers, many of whom stand in programs of pure engagement, derive the same satisfaction working beside those who are clearly unhappy at having been drafted to work? As welfare becomes more widespread, who will screen such workers to ensure that they are given appropriate work, and perform it properly? All these issues pose new problems for everyone involved, says Val Davis, a director of the Community Resources Centre in Kanata, Ont., which provides services and training to underemployed people. Says Davis: "It isn't just about anybody else. There are vulnerable people out there. We have to do police checks on our applicants. How can the Ontario government provide safe service without similar checks?"

Workers in one example of the increasing efforts of out-of-sight governments to maximize their resources. But, says Paul Martin, while that need cannot be ignored, governments must also take care not to lose sight of another fundamental notion: "Just as governments cannot operate without volunteer groups," he says, "so we must remember that volunteers cannot and should not replace the government in many areas. For such roles to function effectively, governments will have to remember to not just ask what volunteers can do instead of them—but also what they can do to help the volunteers."

ANTHONY WILSON SMITH with ANTHONY MAXWELL and LINDA FISHER in Ottawa



# HEROES ON HOME GROUND

Across the country, Canadians are reaching out to make a difference in their own communities

## MAIN STREET YOUTH CENTRE, GRAND BANK, Nfld.

### A hangout to call their own

The boredom drove them to it. The endless nights with nothing for the youth of Grand Bank, Nfld., to do but hang around the outdoor's one restaurant or linger on the streets. No wonder the liquor smuggled in from the nearby Prince Islands of St. Pierre-Miquelon seemed so enticing. Routinely, 12-year-olds could be glimpsed staggering through the southwest Newfoundland fishing community. Until last month, that is. When the Main Street Youth Centre opened in a Depression-era building once used as a drying plant for squid and mackerel, local teens finally had a reason to stay out of trouble. And Newfoundland had a shining demonstration of how any motivated community can take control of its future. Steven Peter Liewellyn, manager of the nearby Clearwater Fine Foods processing plant, and a drinking firebrand behind the centre. "It's a small place like ours can build something like this, anyone can."

It is a radical transformation. The 6,200-square-foot plant now houses a mini-gymnasium, a cafeteria and a 50-seat mini-theatre with big-screen television. There are rooms for ping-pong and pool tables as well as shuffleboard and air hockey games. The centerpiece: a sweeping dance floor, complete with mirrors and fog and light machines. "It is totally cool," gushes Angela Rose, 15. "A group of us have been trying to put together a drop-in centre for a long time. We never anticipated anything like this."

What they needed was a boost from some interested adults. Liewellyn, a parent with two teenage children, grew motivated after spending a shift as a member of the local RCMP auxiliary. He ran across a 13-year-old in a back alley who was too drunk to stand. He and Bob Thomas, a local RCMP sergeant met with Rose's Main Street Youth Committee and agreed to ask the town to open the long derelict squad place. He called on suppliers and customers as far away as Japan and California to help cover the \$400,000 in renovation costs. Townsfolk said "May 4, 1969, Major it happens" buttons, held \$20-a-plate fundraising dinners and

even a one-day "burn-missing," which attracted 100 volunteers to finish off the construction.

On May 4, six weeks after that first meeting, 500 people showed up for the grand opening. Since then, an average of 200 youths have come through the centre's doors daily, and the management has been turned over to the teens. "We're responsible," says Rose. "If we abuse it, we lose it." Anyone with liquor on their breath is banished from the centre. So far, no one has had to be thrown out, and underage drinking has fallen off substantially. As Rose stresses: "On Friday night, the youth centre is the place to be." That is often all the motivation any teenager needs.

JOHN DOMONT

Waiting for the youth centre to open: a 'totally cool' place



## HELPING HANDS, STONY PLAIN, ALTA.

### Altruism after school

Even if they were not so young, their dedication would be remarkable. But five eight members of the Helping Hands club in Stony Plain, Alta., are all 13- and 14-year-olds who have blended friendship and volunteerism in their dedication to good works. Club president Angela Dean and her friends, all new members of the club, visit residents at a senior citizens' home every second Wednesday after school. And they meet every Wednesday to plot new projects—which they organize themselves. In the past 18 months, they have collected garbage around town, produced plays for the seniors' home and hosted a Halloween party for children at the University of Alberta Hospital on nearby Edmonton. Members have held bake sales and bottle drives to raise money for the SFCA, and they have distributed information cards offering to

helping hands members Rose (left) and Stephanie Moffatt with Heather Smith: a club for Good Samaritans in Grade 8

do chores for seniors and families. Last year, Angela and her friends organized a summer camp for a few hours each week, for children under 5 in the Elbow's backyard. And this year, they are co-sponsoring a benefit for kids the same age. In fact, that's what Angela was a Leaders of Tomorrow award from the Volunteer Centre of Edmonton and ALTA, a telecommunications company, for her volunteer activities. "Many times, I have had to tell her to turn the light off," says Angela's mother, Dorcas Dean. "She would say 'I'm taking a little break from playing something.' But Dorcas adds that all eight kids coordinate ideas and work on the projects. "I really like helping people," Angela says. "And I don't mind mowing playing them, because all of my best friends are in the club."

MARY NEMETH

EACH ONE, TEACH ONE, TORONTO  
Teaching by example

I began with a sense of outrage. Two years ago, Michael Yarde, a sales man, after with a cellular phone company, was informed by news reports on a shooting spree in a Toronto café. The media said, "Watch out for young black men in baseball caps," he says. "Well, I was young black and I wear a baseball cap—and I was thoroughly insulted!" But Yarde chose to vent his fury in an unusual way. The 27-year-old basketball player on with Black One Teach One, a unique mentoring program for the city's black youth. For the past year, Yarde has played unofficial big brother to Richard Dumais, 13, whose single mother was in despair over her son's failing grades and constant scrapes at school. Now, taking Richard to a blue boys game or rollerblading along the lakefront, Yarde parents offer judicious advice about homework and life. "I'd rather put my time and money into something like Richard," he says, "than see it spent buying more pills."

Began in 1980 by Florence Rowe, a 35-year-old Toronto legal secretary, Each One Teach One grew out of her own fears at statistics showing skyrocketing dropout and crime rates for young Toronto blacks. Inspired to start a troubled public housing project, she found kids "looking at us like we were aliens from a different planet. I thought, 'Maybe it's because they have no black role models.'" Rowe set out to find disaffected adolescents with blacka who were young enough to relate to rap and hip-hop. For many of the 300 teens she has matched with mentors since the program offers the first glimpse of a middle-class room so unrecognizable that some even lack the vocabulary to define it. "One young man said he wanted to be an accountant," she recalls. "But when an accountant took him to her office, he thought it was so boring. I turned out what he wanted to be was a stock trader!"

From its roots in Rowe's apartment, where she taught private tutoring around her job, Each One Teach One has flourished, now housing its office in Frontier College, a national literacy organization, and a full-time staff co-ordinator. Rowe himself plays mentor to one prince, as well as to a monthly golf club that she admits to occasionally feeling overwhelmed. In April, on the eve of a trip to New York City that she had promised her father, she was contacted by a corporate sponsorship bid through "She golfer and put the \$2,000 tab on her own credit card. "I couldn't have done those girls in the eye if I hadn't kept my word," she says. Like her, Yarde has opted to do more than the program asks. Regularly showing up at parent-teacher meetings, he has hired Richard a coach, and sent him to a club where he learned to be like an angel from heaven to such life," remarks Richard's mother, Brenda Thompson. But Yarde shirks all the accolades. "My job's hard," he says, "will be Richard at 21, gently employed—and not in jail."

MARCI MCKENNA



Dumais (left), Rowe, Yarde: black role models for a new generation

## NISGA'A ECONOMIC ENTERPRISES INC., NASS VALLEY, B.C.

## Underwriting opportunity

They are a proud people, descended from traders. But like other native Canadians, the Nisga'a First Nation of the remote Nass Valley in northwestern British Columbia have faced some harsh realities. The four Nisga'a villages in the mountainous region, 400 km northwest of Vancouver, are among the poorest communities in the province: unemployment is estimated to exceed 60 per cent. But fortunes are beginning to look up. In March, the Nisga'a signed an unprecedented agreement in principle with the federal and provincial governments. If ratified, the deal will give the 6,000 Nisga'a control over 772 square miles of land, plus resource and fishing rights and \$394 million in cash. Land claims aside, the Nisga'a have been diligently planning for their economic future. "We just couldn't afford to sit around waiting," says Matthew Moore, general manager of Nisga'a Economic Enterprises Inc., a community economic development corporation that curricula company profits for investment into new ventures, and whose shareholders are all of the Nisga'a people. "We decided to get out there and begin to pursue some development opportunities."

According to Moore, a 41-year-old economics graduate of Simon Fraser

## ALICEE JOAMIE, IQALUIT, N.W.T.

## Troubleshooter

On a sunny afternoon, Alicee Joamie sits in her living room, a calm presence in the swirling chaos of her daily life. Doors crash open, then slam shut. Children rush in and out, barely distracted by the race away of the 60-year-old Inuit elder sitting quietly in Iglood, a predominantly Inuit community of 4,000 in northern Baffin Island. Joamie is a force to be reckoned with. The author of seven self-help books, she is an energetic volunteer, warning and people in the hospital, counselling villagers about the AIDS threat, and helping to found Baffin Inuit's first women's shelter and legal aid clinic. But most of all, Joamie reaches out to try to improve the lives of troubled children and teenagers. Lots of them.

Joamie notes when she is asked how many foster children she has cared for in the past 20 years. After several rounds of counting on the thick fingers of her weathered hands, she decides on a number: Two hundred. Most of them were taken from their parents because of neglect or sexual abuse. Some stayed a few days or months, others much longer. One child is still with her after 11 years. Sometimes, more Inuit children have been recruited from the home hall out at her, but she takes that in stride. Joamie says they need to look at the environment they have created for their children, one often marred by alcoholism and domestic violence. "If we work from where we get up until we go to bed," she adds, "children don't get taken away."

Joamie also works closely with Inuit teenagers who have run away from their families or stood of the law. Last summer, she served as one of four supervisors who led 15 teens on a camping trip 100 km along Frobisher Bay. She used to teach dance, about healing, sewing and traditional Inuit survival skills as an effort to provide a sense of cultural continuity for the youngsters, many of whom were chosen because they were

University, the corporation's mission is to pursue opportunities in all sectors. Nisga'a Economic Enterprises—which initially received about \$50,000 in federal grants—now has assets of about \$25 million. "We started with bread and butter," says Moore. "All we had were the support, initiation, marriage and good wishes on our sham holders." Since 1986, the first business, a logging joint venture with Roland Baker, has generated about \$4.5 million in profits for the Nisga'a and has employed, on average, 80 to 90 people—90 per cent of them aboriginal. The Nisga'a also own a sawmill company, have just launched a sock and underwear supply business and have acquired a deluxe sports fishing lodge called Wolf Spoken (Klatter House) at the mouth of the Nass River. When fully operational, says Moore, the new ventures should employ about 250 people. "The main objective is to ensure that those businesses are profitable and that they provide us with opportunities to train managers and create employment," he says. "The focus on profit is mainly to ensure



considered high risks for suicide, brought their troubles with them. One threatened to shoot her companions with a rifle, another threatened to kill herself with a knife. At one point, when Joamie tried to break up a fight between two girls, one of them locked her in the stomach. Joamie did not get angry. "If I had reacted in a negative way," she explains, "they would have responded in a negative way." Since then, many of the young people have become her friends.

Joamie has known hard times herself. Six years ago, her parents considered abandoning their premature baby daughter as they left their camp in northern Quebec in a desperate search for food. Luckily, they thought better of it. Joamie spent the rest of her childhood traveling with her family by dog team in pursuit of fish and game before settling in Iglood in 1960. But even in the harshest times, Joamie recalls, her mother helped others by sewing for them or doing what she could. "That's where I learned how to help another person," says Joamie. It is a lesson she constantly lives.

TODD PHILLIPS



Moore: "Basically, we are trying to build our people back up."

the long-term sustainability of jobs." Meanwhile, the operation has helped to secure bank loans for small Nisga'a businesses—everything from independent logging and silviculture contractors to bed and breakfasts—which have tripled in number over the past four years. It has also contributed some \$500,000 in a post-secondary and employment-training initiative. And it has created Nisga'a Economic Development Services, a body responsible for monitoring and coordinating long-term strategic economic planning. Future projects under consideration include agriculture, financial services and the development of co-operatives in the region, noted for its breathtaking scenery and vast open lands. "Basically, we are trying to build our people back up," says Moore. "To give them the sense that they can do whatever they want. They can go out and create businesses, they can be engineers, architects and accountants."

SCOTT STEBBLE



## PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION, REGINA

## Corporate volunteers in the classroom

In 1992, when the Regina public school board and the local chamber of commerce went looking for businesses to become active partners with city schools, Wascana Energy Inc. was among the first to step forward. The Regina-based oil and gas company was quickly assigned to Albert Elementary School. Located in the city centre, the school is surrounded by poor neighborhoods where graffiti-stained walls are not uncommon and gangs are a growing problem. Sixty per cent of the students come from single-parent homes. As part of the Partnerships in Education program, Wascana encourages its employees to volunteer at the school during company time. For up to 15 hours each month, they read to students, talk about careers and take them on field trips. "It's not really a two-way street," says Nancy Johnson, 31, a Wascana business analyst who recently read aboriginal legends to 22 Grade 2 and 3 students. "It adds a human component to your work that can't be measured."

The students also take occasional tours of the eight-story Wascana hotel office. Last December, they learned firsthand about the world of business—oil philanthropy—when they raised \$300 selling school crates at a

booth in the building's lobby. And occasionally by students even spend time looking over the shoulder of president Frank Proke, who says his employees have developed a strong emotional bond with the Albert School kids.

Nowhere is that more evident than in a ceremony that unfolds each month in the school gymnasium, where all 222 students assemble to watch a Wascana employee announce up to three winners of the outstanding Student of the Month award, which salutes perfect attendance and academic dedication. The winners are given a travel certificate, and their names are etched on a plaque that hangs prominently in the main hallway of the school. "You can see on the kids' faces what this kind of recognition means to them," says principal Craig Wodenslager, 42, a 30-year veteran of teaching. "It's a great moment in their lives."

DALE KESLER



## BUNNY THE CLOWN, TORONTO

## The best medicine

Twice a week, Bunny the Clown makes her rounds at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, wheeling through the wards on a bright yellow tricycle loaded with toys. In her willy-petted-out suit and oversized sneakers, Bunty takes seriously her job as part of the healthcare team. "I'm not these entertaining people," says Joan Benker, Bunty's alter ego, a 50-year-old mother of two grown sons. Bunty is a therapeutic clown—one of a new breed designed to ease the medicine of laughter along with soothing anti-anxiety medicines. She offers a diversion to hospital routine, using silly songs and games to encourage a fearful child to accept an unpleasant treatment or to say no to go for physiotherapy. "Our choice is to be asked," says Benker. "We are handing back control to the child. They lead the play—the clown is their friend, their mentor."

Clown therapy started in Canada a decade ago at Winnipeg's Children's Hospital. Although therapeutic clowns are few in number, hospitals around the world are increasingly recognizing the important role they play. "We use children's laughing their pain," says Christine Fader, director of the child life department at the British Columbia Children's Hospital in Vancouver. Weekly visits by Paul Hosono's goofy Doc Williams—with his stethoscope that turns into a toilet plunger and his generosity for incense—she reports, "distact the children from the sadness they are experiencing."



JOHNSON WITH STUDENTS FORMS EMOTIONAL BOND

## PINE TREE PARK ESTATES, SYDNEY, N.S.

## Extending the family circle

It shared bloodline, no common surname. All the same, the residents of the fascia-colored concrete corner property of Pine Tree Park Estates Ltd. on the outskirts of Sydney, N.S., seem as close as any traditional family—maybe more so. "I don't know where I'd be without them," declares tiny white-haired Agnes Cameron, 94. And it is an hard to doubt the absolute sincerity of those words as it is to be skeptical about Lucerne MacIntyre, 56, when she brags the older woman entrusted to her care and says simply: "I think of Agnes as my own."

Pine Tree Park used to be an air force radar base. Then in 1981, New Dawn Enterprises Ltd., the country's oldest community development corporation, paid the county of Cape Breton \$1 for the rights to the abandoned property. Created in 1976, without a dime of government funding, New Dawn is the vision of Greg MacLeod, a charismatic Catholic priest and philosophy professor at Sydney's University College of Cape Breton. New Dawn's mission is at once straightforward and ambitious: to create and operate ventures that make Islanders more self-sufficient—while generating enough revenue to keep those endeavors afloat. "Control over the institutions on Cape Breton has always been offshored," explains Keelin

MacSwain, 35, president of New Dawn since 1988. "This is a chance for us to decide things for ourselves for a change."

With an annual budget of \$4.5 million, New Dawn has had to be selective. For many years, it restricted its activities to the building of affordable family housing, halfway houses for the handicapped and dental clinics. Pine Tree Park is a new departure designed to address a growing problem—the burgeoning needs of the elderly. "We wanted to give seniors an alternative to an institution," explains Mike Maroon, chairman of New Dawn's board of directors.

That is where the real test came in. New Dawn spent \$8.5 million refurbishing the 30 bungalow-style duplexes. The design is standard: three seniors live in one half of the bright white, in the adjoining half lives the family entrusted with their day-to-day care. Says MacSwain: "I like to say that what we do is form extended families."

Cameron, a widow who regales visitors with stories about her days as a sunny mailer, left a nursing home where monthly rates averaged \$3,400 at Pine Tree Park, her costs fell to \$1,690. Down the hall, ex-Canadian National Railways mechanic Lou Henderson, 54—who still sleeps the books at the local Old Fellows lodge—was busy on his electric saw building a new bird feeder. "If I lived in a nursing home, I would have no freedom," he says from his wheelchair. "There's no place like home."

The neighbors agree. MacIntyre, who had been a registered nurse for 32 years before retiring in 1983, and who lives with her husband, Douglas, a contractor, and their daughter, Carol, is with Cameron and Henderson from the moment they rise at 8:30 a.m. until they go to bed. "I describe as work the cooking and cleaning and help she gives the pair with everything from bathing and bathroom functions to taking them to doctors' appointments and administering prescription medicine. "You free the old school of nursing where you look after people one-on-one," she says. "These are not patients. They are more like my own people."

And as in any family, the closeness of the relationship presents its own problems. MacIntyre still has not gotten over the loss of David Macdonald, the 95-year-old who lived in five seniors' units until last January when he had to be transferred to a nursing home after his health deteriorated. "You can't help but fall in love with them," says Carol MacIntyre, a 29-year-old secretary who helps her mother out whenever she can. At Pine Tree Park, the feeling is mutual.



HENDERSON WITH CAROL MACINTYRE: AN ALTERNATIVE TO INSTITUTIONALIZED CARE

SEAMON DOYLE DREIFERGER

JOHN DUMONT



## COVER LOCAL HEROES

### L.O.V.E., MONTREAL

#### A creative fight against juvenile violence

**T**winkle Radeberg learned about the sudden, devastating impact of juvenile violence the hard way, on a cool autumn evening 24 years ago. The Montreal mother was driving with her husband, David, from their home in prosperous Westmount to a dinner party downtown when they saw a burlesque youth dive out of the back seat of a parked car and snatch a purse from an elderly woman. "My husband intervened," she recalls. "He jumped out of our car and chased the boy into some bushes. There was a struggle. This was unwise. He died, almost instantly. The boy was a runaway, a kid with a drug history from a broken home in the United States. He was 14 years old."

Not surprisingly, the incident changed Radeberg's life. But it did so in a way that even she now finds a little strange. "It has taken a while, but I did directly as all of this," says the slim, dishevelled, 64-year-old, anxious over her shoulder from the front step of the Montreal greystone where she is perched, towards a small room on the building's ground floor where

a dozen managers of assorted gender and color are labelling. The room serves as headquarters of an organization Radeberg founded three years ago called L.O.V.E.—for Leave Out Violence. The managers are all enthusiastic participants in the program, an intriguing experiment designed to equip troubled youngsters with the tools they need to walk away from violent lifestyles. "Most of those kids have been defined as being at risk in some way by police and community workers," Radeberg explains. "A lot of them are either victims of violence, or perpetrators themselves. Our aim is to help them develop a critical awareness of the issue, to understand the way things are and, most important, the way things could be."

L.O.V.E., which is funded through private donations, has many facets but the centerpiece is a course in phonography. Twice a week for five months, the participants, aged 14 to 17, meet after school for a three-hour workshop in the photography department at Dawson College in downtown Montreal. Supervised by Concordia University journalism professor Brenda Zasky Throats and Dawson

Rayford (center) with teens, giving young Mounties a voice

photography instructor Stan Chase, the studios are given cameras and access to the college's photo lab, and are assigned the task of documenting in words and pictures what they believe to be the causes of violence and their ideas about how to prevent it. In practical terms, the end result is an exhibit, as well as the production of a handmade book of the teenagers' work. But along the way, something more profound is achieved. "Not only do they pick up a few practical, marketable skills but they are also given a voice," says Radeberg. "And that tends to work magic with their self-esteem."

The project is now in its second year of operation. A total of 39 teenagers have graduated and there are plans to expand the scheme to two other Montreal region alternative high schools. In addition, the students will soon take their work on the road, carrying their message to others across Canada.

As for Twinkle Radeberg herself, she has finally managed to find a measure of comfort in her husband's otherwise agonizingly slow death. "The cage moved to the view that the boy who killed my husband was as much a victim as my husband," she says. "I think Dad might agree with that."

BARRY CAHILL

## TZU CHI CHARITABLE FOUNDATION, VANCOUVER

### Enlightenment through service

**T**he soup kitchen just east of Vancouver's scruffy Lower Main Street is easy to find. Long before noon each day, the throng of hungry cats and strays waiting for a hot lunch extends down the block and around the corner. The free meals are nutritious, but on most days hardly exciting: economical stew or macaroni and cheese. Once a month, however, the hungry and the homeless enjoy something a little different: spicy stir-fried vegetables and other fresh Chinese fare. And they also receive something even more unexpected: the gratitude of the donors or so kindly Chinese-Canadian volunteers who have pre-

pared and served the wholesome food. Explains Gary Ho, who organizes the monthly meal: "You find out you are the minute to be able to serve."

The principle is one that the charitable, soft-spoken businessman has built his life around since coming to Canada in 1982. A successful real-estate developer on his native Taiwan, he was also a practicing Buddhist there. He followed the charitable teachings of Taiwanese Buddhist master

Cheng Yen, whose 60-year-old Tzu Chi Charitable Foundation raises \$900 million annually for charity in Asia. On Cheng's advice, Ho has dedicated most of his time since arriving in Canada to establishing a North American branchhead for Cheng's faith—the Tzu Chi Charitable Corp. "To serve the needy and enlighten the mind."

There is certainly no shortage of needy in his adopted country. Ho's example, meanwhile, has inspired an impressive number of other persons new to Canada to share his vision of enlightenment through community service. Taiwanese-Canadians make up the majority of the 2,600 donors and volunteers who have raised more than \$2.8 million in the 23 months since Ho launched the Buddhist charity—called Tzu Chi Food Relief Canada. The cause that has been called, however, knows no cultural—

or religious—boundaries. Last year, Tzu Chi donors bought and distributed warm winter coats to more than 100 Vancouver street kids. And in addition to their monthly appetizer at the soup kitchen (just the rest of the time by the Salvation Army), the group's volunteers also serve Chinese meals at four Vancouver-area senior citizens' homes each week. Ho emphasizes that every dollar his members raise is spent directly on charity; members bear the rest of the group's administration out of their own pockets.

Tzu Chi Canada's most ambitious project will open its space provided by the Vancouver Hospital & Health Sciences Centre this October. The Tzu Chi Institute for Complementary and Alternative Medicine will provide the first setting in a major North American hospital for researchers to examine the effectiveness of such unconventional therapies as acupuncture, taijiquan and traditional Chinese and European herbal medicines. "Traditional medicine has years and years of history," says Dr. William Te, a pediatrician-medicinist who first sparked Ho's interest in the cause. "Common sense says there's something there that we have an obligation to

Be a Taiwanese immigrant, serve the homeless

look at." By early June, Tzu Chi donors and supporters who include former B.C. lieutenant premier David Lam, a Baptist—had already raised \$3.1 million of the \$6 million that Tzu Chi has committed to contribute to the new center over the next five years.

But it's the simple, many-centered, second to the other of personal enlightenment through service that is why he encourages his members to volunteer time, rather than cash, to charitable efforts. It is also why, on the second Tuesday of every month, the nonprofit's inventory can usually be found shingling styrofoam in a soup kitchen for the homeless. Because, he says, "when you just write a cheque, you won't be touched."

CHIEF WOOD



## THE COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT ACTION PROGRAM, OTTAWA

### Help for the jobless

**P**arked next to a rack of religious literature in the staff's foyer of the Bellberry Creek Baptist Church in an Ottawa suburb, two middle-aged women sit behind a table covered with job search pamphlets as children pound out piano scales in adjacent rooms. The women nod their heads sympathetically when a man with greying hair snarls in and spits out his story. The 50-year-old office manager lost his job eight weeks ago and is depressed. Betty Stephens, a permitter and volunteer, hands the man a registration form. His name will end up on a database of job seekers—one of hundreds of people who have turned to 12 Ottawa-area churches to help them find work.

The Community Employment Action Program is the brainchild of Bellberry Creek member Gertie Rochon, who found 38 members anxious about government layoffs when he returned from a trip abroad last year. "People were really deeply troubled," says Rochon, an international human resources consultant. Last September, the program was born, with five different churches signed on. According to Rochon, the volunteers are encouraged to be the "open and warm" for job leads. It's with, meanwhile, scans the database for matches. Volunteers hold regular registration sessions, offer counselling and stage seminars on topics such as coping with job loss and resume writing. All this is free, except enrolment in the two-week intensive jobfinding course. Of the 50 who have registered to be the "open and warm" for job leads, 115 have been hired. But he points out that success is often measured in different ways: a person with a cardboard résumé knows how to write a winning one, a self-doubter gains confidence. "We hope to get people to the turnaround point where they say, 'I'm going to make things happen.'"

BRENDA BRUNS-WEILL

## THE TETRA SOCIETY, VANCOUVER Engineering freedom

**V**ancouver city councillor Stan Sullivan, who gets to his office as a wheelchair, remembers how it was before. Paul Cernak's cast hangs. In 1987, a quadriplegic as a result of a skiing accident eight years earlier, Sullivan was being an engineer and desperate to become more independent and employable. But with limited use of his arms and no use of his fingers, he recalls, "I couldn't use any toilet. I couldn't open the car door. I couldn't get out the door because of the knob. How could I get a job when I couldn't get out the door?" He remembers sitting in his room, "seething with frustration." Finally, Sullivan wrote to the province's Association of Professional Engineers, asking if its members could help him. Reply came in the person of Cernak, formerly an engineer with B.C. Hydro and now an independent consultant. The first problem he tackled was in the kitchen, where Sullivan could not hold open his freezer door and remove food at the same time. Cernak solved that with a custom-designed door catch, fashioned from a coat hanger. "Without statistics," Sullivan says, "he revolutionized my life."

Soon, Cernak and other volunteer engineers were finding mutually inventive ways to help other Vancouver area quadriplegics overcome barriers to independence. Since then, the network of volunteer engineers and technicians assisting one-wheel "mobility devices," as Sullivan calls them, for people with disabilities, has blossomed beyond all expectations. Formulated in 1986 as the Tetra Society, with Sullivan as its executive director, it now has 37 chapters throughout North America. Last year, the society—whose sole stipend is a \$25,000 consultant's salary from the provincial government—under took 1,200 projects.

Few were high-tech or expensive. An adapter light with a button switch, built as Vancouver for about \$80, allows a deaf four-year-old with cerebral palsy to get her teacher's attention without having to raise her arm. In London, Ont., volunteer biomedical engineering students assembled a specialized book rest for a woman with spinal injuries, using scrap wood and 79 cents worth of hardware. Says Harry Hardy, a retired Blomquist machine designer who recently completed his 20th year for the society, "I enjoy figuring out the problem and what they need to solve it. It's always nice to see how happy a person is after it's done, how they can do something for themselves that they couldn't before." It is a joy of scores of volunteers that Sullivan, who was his executive director in 1989, shares and understands.

CHRIS WOOD

## BELLEVUE MANOR, OTTAWA

### Building spirit from the ground up

**M**ong 20 tons of sand using wheelbarrows pushed by children is probably not the most efficient way to build a park. But the residents of Bellevue Manor in Ottawa's west end would not have had it any other way. For the past few months, hundreds of volunteers from the community, where roughly half the families receive public assistance, have built bike paths, dirt lawns, terraces, garage sales and car washes. Their goal, to finance a new

playground for their children. But the people of Bellevue wanted more than just a place for their kids to have fun. They also hoped to teach them a lesson in the importance of community service—by involving them every step of the way. "I baked banana muffins by myself for a bake sale," says 12-year-old Mesage Robitaille. In all, the community raised \$34,600. Youth Service Canada, a division of the federal human resources department, kicked in another \$23,000 as part of a new nationwide initiative called Neighbor Aid, whose goal is to

Sullivan (left), Hest  
'How could I get  
job when I could  
get out the door'



## NEECHI FOODS COMMUNITY STORE, WINNIPEG

### Bartering for bannock

**A**s she leans into the dough, kneading it on the heavy stainless steel counter-top, Lydia Muslock smiles and says, "I'm getting so strong I could even wrestle my old man and beat him." The Ottawa woman started making bannock, a traditional native bread, more than 40 years ago for the men on her northern Manitoba reserve who would take it into the bush on their moose hunting trips. "Usually they would be gone for about two weeks," she says. "But when they run out of bannock, they would come home." Now, Muslock makes up to 100 loaves each day in the Neechi Foods Community Store in Innis City, Winnipeg, which is owned and operated by Muslock and eight other aboriginals, who also take an active part in local community work. The store—which has yet to make a profit, and takes its name from the Cree word for "friend"—sells quality food, sometimes at less than cost, to the city's poorest people. "Why should the big national stores take all the money out of our community without putting anything back?" asks manager Louise Champagne, who helped found the enterprise in 1989. "We want to offer something different for people."

And the differences are obvious. While Neechi sells the usual selection of meat, dairy products, canned goods and vegetables, there is also a bin of bananas, apples and oranges that children can buy at half price. A rack of aboriginal children's books and handicrafts. Often greeting cards stands beside a corner display of moosehide, made by local craftsmen who trade them for food. About 100 families from the Wabigoon Indian reserve in Northern Ontario earn thousands of dollars each summer by gathering wild blueberries and shipping their pickings to Neechi.

Neechi's owners have also worked to effect broader changes in their downtown neighborhood. "With prostitution, drugs and gangs, this area turns into an ugly circus at night," says Champagne. The staff has been working with police to organize frequent foot patrols, and Muslock recently led a successful campaign for better street lighting. "The people we serve are at the bottom of the economic scale," says Champagne. "We're just trying to make their lives better."

DON MCGILLIVRAY



Muslock (left), Champagne  
kneading moosehide for food



Bellevue kids baking banana muffins, raising 20 tons of sand

encourage community volunteering among Canadian children. With the fund-raising completed, in mid-June 800 men, women and children rolled up their sleeves for five days of digging, landscaping, drilling and painting. "I babysat, worked in the food court, and helped during construction—like handing stuff to big people," says Amanda Moreira, 12. Most of the heavy machinery, including backhoes and trucks, and the professional services of designers and surveyors, were donated or "got me at a very good deal," says Connor Savage, a consultant for Youth Service Canada. The result: a sparkling new park complete with swings, slides and other playground toys—and a community that has built for itself a sense of pride and accomplishment.

RANDRA FARMER

## AMBASSADOR PROGRAM, TORONTO

## Straight talk from the street

**H**e left home and dropped out of school at 15, living in group homes, selling drugs to survive, landing in jail three times—for assault, possession of firearms and theft. But when one of his closest friends "got pretty worn" and killed someone during a botched robbery attempt last year, Lorne Hargrove, now 30, took it as a sign to head back to school and began turning his life around. In the process, he has redrafted with a tightly clipped goatee and a gold necklace the life he's been working hard to reverse the path of other young people who may be flailing with a life on the streets. He does so as one of 18 students enrolled in the Ambassador Program, administered jointly by the Toronto Board of Education and seven local social service agencies, including Best Street and Youth Link.

Completing their high school diplomas in the mornings, the "student ambassadors" spend their afternoons visiting senior elementary and secondary schools across the city, presenting unvarnished accounts of life as inner-city dropouts. "When we talk about gangs, I tell them there are mothers out there on crack who aren't buying diapers for their kids," says Hargrove. "When they ask about gangs, I tell them I joined a gang because I needed people to care about me, but that when I went to jail, people forgot I ever existed."

Although their message is often sobering, the ambassadors offer encouragement as well. "So many young kids feel desperate and hopeless," says teacher and program designer Linda Humphrey. "The students we visit hear some pretty eye-opening stories, but they also meet three-dimensional people of wisdom and hope." For Hargrove, that is reason enough to be part of the program. "I'm sure I don't help every kid I meet," he says, adjusting his Cleveland Indians cap and slouching in his chair, "but I think I help some of them, and you know, that's pretty cool."

VICTOR DWYER



Ambassadors: Ry, Simon (left), Lou Anne Simpson, Humphrey, wisdom and hope

## ALBERTA ECOTRUST FOUNDATION, CALGARY

## Partners in environmental preservation

**I**t may seem unusual on the face of it: industry working in tandem with environmentalists. But that is what members of the Alberta Ecotrust Foundation have been doing for five years. The Calgary-based foundation recently tapped the million-dollar quota in grants, having doled it out in parcels of \$2,000 to \$20,000, to fund 86 grassroots environmental projects throughout Alberta. On the corporate side, so-called sustaining members of Ecotrust—including Petro-Canada and the Canadian Pacific Chertable Foundation—agree to pay \$25,000 a year for three years into the fund. The environmental member organizations agree to formally reduce Ecotrust for the same time period. Together, 10 representatives from each sector decide by consensus which projects should be funded. "It enhances relations between two sectors that see often at odds," says Randy Gosselin, the corporate sector co-chairman of Ecotrust and a vice-president of another sustaining company, Canadian Occidental

Petroleum Ltd. "At Ecotrust, we learn the language at the door."

Among the groups that have benefited is the Cuckoo Creek Ecotrust, based northwest of Calgary. Last year, Ecotrust gave the institute about \$20,000 to develop and test a new system to count wolf, coyote—any animals weighing about five pounds—which were declared extinct in Canada in 1978. The institute, led by president Cleo Searns, breeds the felines for reintroduction into the southern British Columbia's group played tape-recorded wolf howling calls in the wild and recorded fox responses, which they then digitized and analyzed on a computer to identify individual animals—as a order to tally fox populations. "And you can count them without trapping them, or handling them," says Searns.

Other Ecotrust projects include environmental education and conservation programs as well as recycling efforts. Among the criteria for funding is that projects include a substantial number of volunteers. In 1994, Ecotrust funded the



Intuition with focus: Cleo Searns, declared extinct in Canada in 1978

Waterloo Park Community Association Green Team, located in Waterloo Lakes National Park in southwestern Alberta, for a project that included the purchase of a trailer to collect household recyclables. The group recently won further Ecotrust funding for several smaller initiatives—including a substantial number of volunteers. In 1994, Ecotrust funded the

providing recycling service to local residents and businesses, and the purchase of special containers to collect commercial cardboard for recycling. "With all the downsizing, it's interesting that green initiatives are being recognized as important," says Carol Watt, an observing nurse and the longtime chairwoman of the Green Team Committee. On Canada Day, Watt's years of service with the Green Team and her volunteer work with other local organizations

were well recognized; she will be among the first 15 people to receive the Governor General's new Canada Award, which recognizes individuals whose unpaid voluntary contributions provide extraordinary help or care to families or groups in the community. Indeed, extraordinary people like Watt are turning Ecotrust funding into environmental action.

MARY NEMETH

## CORPO, VICTORIAVILLE, QUE.

## Community headquarters

**O**n several counts, William Ninacs is an unusual fellow. For a start, he is a transplant from southern Ontario who has managed to carve a considerable niche for himself in southern Quebec, in a town where the population is not only 98 per cent francophone but 85 per cent exclusively French-speaking. But by itself is no small feat, never mind the fact that the 50-year-old former accountant is the victim of a rare neurological disorder called Charcot-Marie-Tooth Syndrome that is gradually stripping all the life from his body. But his reputation rests on something more than mastering the French language and having a complex physical affliction. Ninacs is the principal architect of an elegantly simple yet effective experiment in community development. "Don't try to paint me as some kind of hero," Ninacs protests. "I was simply the guy in the hot seat at the time."

The late year 1988 and the seat that Ninacs occupied was co-ordinator of the Corporation de développement communautaire des Beaus-Prés, better known as the Corpe. A coalition of 98 grassroots co-operatives, community organizations and service groups, the Corpe was, and still is, based in Victoriaville, a town of 35,000, 120 km east of Montreal, where Ninacs has lived for 30 years. And despite his protests, it was Ninacs who helped to steer the Corpe down a new path, adding a hard-edged element of marketplace economics to the organization's traditional social objectives. He did so by engineering the acquisition, for a nominal fee, of an abandoned 62,000-sq-unit Hydro Quebec installation in Victoriaville. "That gave us the equity," he explains. "Without ownership, we could not mortgage. Without the ability to mortgage, we could not obtain financing. And without financing, we simply had no control over our own destiny."

Ninacs, who is currently completing a PhD in social work at Laval University in Quebec City, stepped down as co-ordinator of the Corpe in 1993, but remains a member. "I'm still not sure why," he muses. "But that's the year my mother died, my father died, and my sickness finally put me in a wheelchair for good."

The former Hydro Quebec building, however, has blossomed into a growing financial concern. It now houses the offices of 35 community-based organizations, including a worker farmers plant employing handicapped workers, a soup kitchen, a job counselling centre, an AIDS advocacy group and three recycling operations, including one that recycles used clothing. "That store's revenues are now approaching \$250,000 annually," Ninacs proudly notes. "That's a lot of 50-cent items." And a lot of financial clout for the Corpe.



Ninacs: adding hard-edged economics to traditional social objectives

BARRY CANE

## ABILITY ONLINE, TORONTO

## Inspired connections

**D**e Arlene Lefebvre's voice follows, remembering her first encounter with a young patient named Laura. The Grade 3 student had contracted meningitis and—to save her life—doctors had to amputate her legs. “She was a fighter,” says Lefebvre, a physiotherapist at Toronto’s Hospital for Sick Children where Laura was treated. “She woke up without legs—she was depressed, she didn’t want to live, she didn’t want to eat. I thought, ‘How can I give this kid hope that there is a life without legs?’” To help Laura deal with her loss, Lefebvre looked her up at Ability Online, an innovative electronic support group she had established a year earlier. “One good role model is worth a thousand shrinks,” Lefebvre contends. “I put her in touch by computer with Carlos Costa, a wonderful swimmer without legs. Now, she is rollerblading with her prosthetic legs.”

Ability Online—the first service of its kind in Canada—handles about 1,200 calls a day across Canada, the United States, Europe and Australia. The free e-mail link allows chronically ill, disabled or disabled children to communicate from their homes or hospital beds with others who have a disability, as well as with friends, family, classmates and volunteer mentors. “We’ve just had our eighth call,” says Lefebvre, who started the program six years ago with a single computer. Her first attempt to put patients on-line ended in disaster when some of the children were threatened—or misled—on a commercial bulletin board. “Get a link with a seven-dollar donation, and someone says, ‘You idiot, you don’t know how to spell words,’” says Lefebvre. “The kids got discouraged.”

But Lefebvre—a former Montessori, affectionately called Dr. Froggie by her young patients—had glimpsed the potential of an electronic support group and she refused to give up. In 1993, she

Lefebvre (center) and pals: One good role model is worth a thousand shrinks

realized her plan for a “friendly on-line environment” with the help of Ilana Hillel, a retired firefighter and computer wizard, a corps of volunteers and donations from private sources. Ability Online now has more than 4,000 current users, but Lefebvre is determined to expand. “My dream is to have a laptop in every [hospital] room,” she says. The service operates without government aid. “We don’t fit any category,” says Lefebvre. “They said, ‘How many of your users are disabled?’ I said, ‘I don’t know. I don’t ask.’ One kid had been logging on for a year before he said, ‘By the way, I have cancer.’” says Lefebvre who spends five hours every evening answering children’s e-mail messages. “Holding people in touch with each other,” she says, “is my main goal. With Ability Online, Dr. Froggie loved a day to do just that.”

SHARON DOYLE DEBRIGER

## RESO, MONTREAL

## Neighborhood renaissance

**R**ESO is the organization’s name, a play on words, the French word for work as well as an acronym for the *Réajoutement pour le renouveau des quartiers de l’Ouest de Montréal*—the corporation for the economic and social revitalization of Southwest Montreal. A coalition of citizens, labor and community groups, RESO is dedicated to the rebirth of a once vital neighborhood on the fringe of the city’s downtown. As the current decade opened, business was a wholesale flight from the crumbling factories that line the banks of the old Lac Beauport Canal. As the city’s population grew, there was a growing desire to displace the population, as factories were being torn down to replace condominiums. RESO was created in 1990 in response to both trends. “All of us gradually realized that if we did not do something to help ourselves, nobody else would,” says the organization’s executive director, Nancy Neuman.

Since RESO was created, it has provided training and as-

sessing advice for more than 200 local businesses, principally in the food, transportation and printing sectors. As well, it has provided training in such skills as job-search techniques and computer literacy for close to 2,000 unemployed area residents. Of about 1,000 people who turned to RESO in its last fiscal year, roughly 200 have secured jobs. Another 300 returned to school, 100 found apprenticeships.

The organization has achieved its goals through a combination of innovation and common sense. Lobbying by RESO has kept further factories from being sited residential. And it helped save 600 jobs at a glass factory by discovering that functional literacy among production-line workers was standing in the way of modernization. To address the problem, RESO helped establish a literacy program, getting the union, company and a local literacy group to work together to resolve the situation. As a result, many workers are now able to maintain advanced manufacturing equipment and use personal computers. “Most problems have solutions,” notes Neuman. “But you can’t find them until you identify the real nature of the problem. That is what RESO is all about.”

BARBARA CAME

## VANANCY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION, VANCOUVER

## Helping the homeless

**I**t is an age of record bank profits and soaring service charges, the Vancouver City Savings Credit Union has managed to make community activism as important to its mandate as the bottom line. Now in its 50th year, it is funded by 54 individuals who between them contributed \$25 to create an institution to provide loans and mortgages to people denied financing by traditional banks, especially Vancouver’s working-class east end. Now Canada’s largest credit union with roughly \$4.5 billion in assets and 225,000 members, most of them located in British Columbia’s Lower Mainland, VanCity, as it is commonly known, turns a portion of its annual earnings—usually about \$600,000 a year—over to the VanCity Community Foundation, launched in 1989 with seed money of \$1 million. The foundation, whose primary endeavor is to fund social and community projects, has since raised to \$4.5 million, in-

Lyster guarantees recycling activities for those on the street

received \$800,000 in 1995, a third of which will go towards establishing the VanCity Place for Youth, a proposed drop-in center for street kids in downtown Vancouver. Other business partners have included consulting services for profit-makers wanting to get off the street, affordable housing projects for seniors and the disabled, and a pre-pregnancy program for young prospective auto mechanics. The foundation also lends money—sometimes interest free—to community-based nonprofit groups to ensure their “long-term self-sustainability.”

The foundation is clearly not afraid to take risks. Just ask Ken Lyster. From 1989 until 1994, the self-described 49-year-old skateboarder and “hell-on-wheels dumpster diver” roamed the alleyways and garbage bins of downtown Vancouver—which has no blue-no recycling program as a byproduct of recycling—for bits of metal and cans he could return to local recyclers. Problem was, there were lines on how many each would accept. Lyster and other street people in the city’s Downtown Eastside—the neighborhood with the lowest per capita income in Canada—decided to begin a grassroots recycling initiative. Predicting that they could gather five million bottles and cans a year at a central location, say, only to the collection, and then return the containers to manufacturers for deposit and a small handling fee, they approached VanCity. The foundation agreed to give them an interest-free loan of \$12,500—and extended a further \$12,500 line of credit, personally guaranteed by an anonymous VanCity member in 1995. United We Can opened in a storefront on Vancouver’s East Cordova Street.

According to the self-appointed Lyster, now senior and general manager of the facility, which employs four full-time sorters and four part-timers, up to 400 people a day leave in bottles and cans for cash. Handling their spoils in shopping carts and green garbage bags, many are homeless, have problems with substance abuse or suffer from mental illness. In just 18 months, United We Can has not only met its commitments to VanCity but has also paid out nearly \$600,000 in cash to the collection—and has provided a much-needed environmental service. In a special fund-raising initiative last Christmas, the nonprofit organization set aside a box in which its gatherers, some of whom have nothing, could donate an empty container or two. The proceeds—\$197 in all—went to a child-care center across the street. “These are some of the most wonderful people you could ever meet,” says Lyster. “They have lives that can make you weep and jump for joy at the same time.”

SCOTT STEBBLE



**Hall and courier Cyprien**  
Sander: psychiatric survivors  
fight the stereotypes

The notes grew out of the trend to de-institutionalize psychiatric patients. But once released, most found their lives a meaningless round of rejection and boredom, and they usually ended back in the hospital. "No employer was going to hire a psychiatric survivor," says Hall. "There's still such a stigma attached. People have a real fear of mental illness." But one group decided to take the problem into its own hands. With a grant from the Ontario Ministry of Health—and advice from a board member who ran her own delivery company—they settled on a courier business where the messengers, each outfitted with a two-way radio and a public transit pass, travelled by foot, bus and subway instead of bicycle or car. That gave those barred from driving because of their medication a chance to work. Unlike other businesses, A-Way tailored its media approach to meet its employees' needs, allowing leaves of absence for treatment or relapses.

Paying each courier a 30-per-cent commission on each delivery, it started out with a handful of government and social service agency accounts. Now, its roster of 1,000 clients includes hospitals, credit unions and architects. A dozen couriers a year move on to other jobs, and like the ones who stay, they believe the conventional wisdom that those prisoners of a non-physical career work. For many, the sole restraint on their enthusiasm is the cap on their social assistance benefits that allows them to make only \$300 a month extra before being subject to deductions. But half of A-Way's couriers opt for that penalty—and staying because "you can get out of the house and bring a change to the world that isn't a welfare cheque," says Hall. "All that self-esteem stuff—people are paying for this."

Last year, A-Way made a 30-per-cent profit on \$20,000 in billings, but it has not been without turbulence. Occasionally, a courier gets disoriented and has to be hauled out on the road. And three years ago, a ministry of health oversight team discovered the company's bookkeeping was in shambles financially, that situation arose when professionals were in charge. When they left, Hall applied for the executive director's post—one of only a small number of psychiatric survivors among 40 applicants. A-Way's unorthodox staff was delighted when she was the job. "It was one thing to be couriers," says Hall. "But it's really a big thing to say we can run it ourselves."

A-Way has inspired other psychiatric survivor businesses—among them a seven-year-old Toronto cleaning service called Fresh Start Cleaning & Maintenance. But none could come without provoking swirling gossip, which are scheduled for further cuts next year. Still, Mari Crell, a psychiatric survivor who is Fresh Start's coordinator, has come up with an argument for continued funding from a survey of her own staff. Before being hired, most secured 48 days a year in hospital, afterward, it dropped to zero. Calculating the bill for such a stay, she estimated the cost to taxpayers had plunged from \$250,000 to \$51,000 for Fresh Start's 30 employees. But the real benefit, Crell says, is beyond the reach of the bottom line. "I was told I was incapable of working," says Crell. "What's important about these businesses is that the lives of some of the poorest and most marginalised members of society are greatly enhanced."

MARIE McDONALD

## "If you've got energy, imagination and a great product, it doesn't matter what the competition's got."

Richard J. Neri, College Gains Canada Ltd.



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### COVER LOCAL HEROES

#### A-WAY EXPRESS, TORONTO

#### Finding a route to independence

**I**s a second-floor walk-up above a Toronto dry-cleaning shop, a poster on the office walls asks "What do Abraham Lincoln, Winston Churchill, Gustav Mahler and some of your friends have in common?" The answer: "Depressive illness." That reminder has more than the usual resonance for Lucane Hall, the sunny 34-year-old executive director of A-Way Express Courier Service. From the age of 15, Hall was in and out of psychiatric wards with a dizzying range of diagnoses that kept her dependent on mind-numbing drugs. Finally, her doctor advised her to quit her job in a veterinary tech class. "I remember going to a bank to try to open an account with a welfare cheque," she says, "and they laughed at me. I was no handmaid." In 1991, after a stint in group housing houses and living on the street, Hall attempted suicide—swallowing her mother's supply of medication in a single gulp. When she woke from a coma, she discovered a chunk of her liver had been cut out. "That was the very bottom," she says. "Absolute hell."

But, exchanging back in health, she suddenly found a reason to get up each day: a job she landed as a part-time courier at A-Way, a delivery firm launched in 1987 by former patients of mental institutions who dub themselves "psychiatric survivors." In A-Way's common room, she met others who had endured the same devastating struggles. Now, Hall serves as the \$42,000-a-year executive director of a nonprofit company that is entirely run by psychiatric survivors, from its 40 couriers to its office staff of 17, which includes dispatchers and bookkeepers. Fresh from celebrating its ninth anniversary last month, A-Way has been hailed as a model of its kind both in this country and abroad—an innovative attempt to tackle the estimated 65-per-cent unemployment rate among those with a history of mental health problems. "A-Way was a matter of life and death for me," says Hall. "It made the difference that helped me survive."

More than one foot tall, broad-shouldered and good-looking, James Thorne finds the peculiar mix of a former child prodigy (half of Ferraro) and of playing baseball and basketball (and every other sport) that could damage his fingers," his manager, Walter Houghton, wryly admits, the 30-year-old violinist from Toronto, Man., has the fresh complexion and easy smile of someone at home on the Prairies that Thorne—once described by renowned American violinist Paul Krumpholtz as "the most beautiful" Eric Friedman—as "a talent that comes around once in 100 years"—happens to be equally at home on the stages of some of the world's great concert halls.

As he signed a Coke in a Toronto coffee shop recently, Thorne seemed pleasantly unpretentious—a quality that stands out in his performances. Critics have repeatedly observed that, despite his extraordinary virtuosity, Thorne puts the music ahead of the spectacle. "It's not going to give my playing towards the market," Thorne says, insisting that his own personal stamp is less important to him than deciphering the puzzle of what the composer really wrote. For his first CD, *James Thorne*—on the Cleveland Orchestra label, with which he has just signed an exclusive, five-year contract—Thorne chose music he has been dedicating for more than a decade. Asked during an appearance on a Winnipeg television show when he was 9 what his favorite music was, Thorne replied that he liked "fast playing." His questioner introduced him afterward to Zubin Mehta's recording of Paganini's *Capriccio*, and Thorne has been playing these frantically difficult pieces ever since.

Thorne comes by his artistic leanings naturally. His mother is a former dancer with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, and his father teaches trumpet at Brandon University. (His 10-year-old sister likes to sing and play the piano, as well as soccer and tennis.) He got his first violin when he was 5 and never looked back, studying with the late Canadian violinist Francis Chaplin and later with Sally Thomas at the famed Meadowcroft School of Music in upstate New York. Competitions have played an important role in getting Thorne noticed, and when he was young they provided the only opportunities he had to perform. He looks back with amazement at the difficulty of some of the music he was playing then. "But as I said," he says, "I never thought about whether something was hard or easy. I just played it."

His first big win was at the age of 13, when he won the Grand Prix in Strassburg at the Canadian Music Competition. More recently, in 1993, he won CBC Radio's 21st National Competition for Young Performers. Neil Gray, CBC's co-ordinating producer for the competition, remembers that Thorne's Winnipeg audition was so exciting that "the jury literally had to sit on their hands to keep from applauding."



Thorne: constantly difficult pieces

## A Prairie boy meets Paganini

music need." Thorne concedes that he has never played a single rock 'n' roll recording. But he and his roommate in New York City, where Thorne is working on a bachelor's degree in music at the Juilliard School, share a collection of approximately 800 classical CDs. "This real learning doesn't happen at the conservatory," says, and listening to other musicians is one way the learning goes on when his fingers are still. Even so, he practices a minimum of two hours a day, and often plays all day long, sometimes spending as much time at the piano as he does at his violin.

Rather than rushing his career, Thorne is taking one step at a time, continuing at the Juilliard (where he is in danger of trouble for his frequent absences for play concerts), and adding to an already impressive repertoire of concertos. Next year he is scheduled to play 10 different concertos, from Vivaldi to Shostakovich, bringing the number he has performed in public to 25. He has another 15 at his fingertips, ready to go.

"It's a weird way to live," Thorne says, referring to a performing schedule that takes him all over the world, including concerts in Berlin and St. Petersburg last year, an upcoming date in Hong Kong and a performance at the Hollywood Bowl in August. "Sometimes it's lonely, but I'm a great tourist," he says. "I walk every where and see everything."

Thorne's schedule does not often permit him to be a tourist away from the job, but this spring he took a rare two weeks off to drive across the United States with his older brother, who just graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. They were not, however, driving a Ferrari. That will have to wait until Thorne has found a way of securing that other expensive Italian import: a Stradivarius.

BARBARA POOLE

## The dark side of Utopia

An author casts a cold eye on the chaotic Sixties

BARBARA TOWNER

By A. S. Byatt  
(Random House, \$25 pages, \$34)

A. S. Byatt's new novel, *Behet Tower*, puts her among that select company of novelists—including such figures as Daniel Defoe, Charles Dickens and Doris Lessing—whose books hold up a mirror to a society at a crucial moment in its history. The English writer is already well known in North America for *Possession*, a *Romance*, her bestselling 1990 book that generated a fascinating love story out of two scholars' pursuit of a literary mystery. Cambridge educated, and with wide experience as a lecturer, reviewer and broadcaster, Byatt knows the British academic and intellectual worlds inside out, so it is hardly surprising that she should return to that milieu in *Behet Tower*. And once more, her subtly playful wit and effortless storytelling abilities are in abundant evidence. But what propels *Behet Tower* into a whole new orbit of achievement is Byatt's fresh and kindly intelligent interpretation of the Sixties—an era many would argue has been deconstructed to death.

The heroism of *Behet Tower*, Frederick Pinner, will be familiar to readers of Byatt's earlier novels, *The Virgin in the Garden* and *Shill Life*. Those books traced her life as a schoolteacher's daughter from the north of England, through a low-keyed undergraduate career at Cambridge. As *Behet Tower* opens in 1968, Frederick has gotten himself into deeper waters. Rebuffed from the accidental death of his sister, Stephanie, and finally having to anchor himself in so-called real life, he has married the decidedly unintellectual Nigel Bower, the rich owner of a country estate. They have a child, a four-year-old son. Frederick is feeling bored and restless. Boring she has ruined her life, she tries to convince Nigel that she should have her own career. But the inflexible and controlling Nigel refuses, and increasingly resists her demands with violence. Finally, he loses all control and wounds her with an axe.

Frederick's nighttime escape to London with her son, and Nigel's frenzied pursuit of them, are what lead *Behet Tower* most of its narrative drive. Frederick becomes a working mother, piecing together an income from lecturing, reviewing and road-showing for a publishing company. She discovers a London setting with ren-

ditionary energy. The Beatles are on the rise, education is in crisis, adolescents and half art are in, while many artists are enthusiastically rejecting all influences from the past. Frederick, with her analytical mind and academic training, views all this with a skeptical cynicism—and many of the novel's most penetrating insights arise from her experience.

*Behet Tower* does well beyond simply cast-



Byatt: a master of playful wit and effortless storytelling ability

allegorizing or nonsensicalizing Sixties social phenomena. Byatt views the era in terms of the ancient tension between traditional norms and individualism—in the Sixties, the balance tilted dramatically in favor of the latter. Frederick does not condemn this situation; she herself has benefited from the new freedom for women. But at the same time, the novel echoes the libidinal story of the Tower of Babel, evoking a world where multiplying individualisms seem to be creating a cosmology of mutually incompatible myths and values.

Of course, this phenomenon is not limited to the Sixties; it is increasingly a characteristic of a multicultural, speech-dissipated world. But Byatt has focused on a moment of frenzied hope, when it was widely believed the changes would lead to a better society. The novel, on the whole, does not share that optimism. In passages

of subtle satire, it suggests that too much freedom can lead to anarchy—or to a whole new kind of conformity. In one amusing section, Byatt portrays a travelling comedian that is studying the British educational system, one of its more cultural members likes to chant his own awful poetry at students while encouraging them to rebel against their teachers.

The theme of timeless freedom also informs "Babbalanze," a novel told within *Behet Tower*, and written by one of Frederick's new acquaintances, the moonstruck and foul-speaking artist's model Julie Weston. This book—which results in a landmark obscenity trial—follows a group of nobles who escape the terrors of the French Revolution in order to set up an ideal community where every person will have his deepest desires fulfilled. Their experiment leads not to Utopia, but to solitariness and ruin.

JOHN HEMINGWAY

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## BOOKS

### Excavating the soul

#### FUGITIVE PIECES

By Anne Michaels  
(Delacorte & Stewart)  
264 pages, \$25.95

In Anne Michaels' extraordinary first novel, the narrative is a Polish Jew orphaned by the Second World War, pondering the far-reaching effects of a single human gesture. "If the evil act can't be erased, then neither can the good," Jakob Beer writes in a memoir. "It's as if a measure of society as a way... what is the saddest act of kindness that is considered heroic?" In wartime Poland, because one could be sentenced to death as a deserter, Jakob's eyes were closed as he escaped across a field. In Jakob's case, it was more dramatic: after Nazis ordered his parents and abducted his sister, he was rescued by a Greek smuggler, who smuggled the unmarked seven-year-old boy out of the country to his Greek island home. The terrible events of Jakob's childhood do not fade, despite Athens' loving care. And Jakob's lifelong inner turmoil—has he remembered and he need to forget—has a haunting resonance, especially for the book's other main character, Ben, the Canadian son of Jewish refugees.

But to describe *Fugitive Pieces* as the story of Holocaust survivors is too limiting. Michaels, a 38-year-old award-winning poet, explores the urgent claims of the past on the present, how one can become "endless by a word, a word, a photo of a moment, a coin of shoes." And the Toronto-based author's arresting, image-laden prose and understated knowledge of everything from botany to linguistics give the novel a startling originality. Indeed, foreign rights to the novel have been sold to prestigious houses in the United States and Britain, and several other countries—a rarity for first-time fiction.

Michals beautifully unites the book's different settings: the ancient city of Byzantium, Krakow, Poland, where Jakob was born a day Greek island and 1950s Toronto—by viewing them through the eyes of a natural scientist. When Athos accepts an invitation to teach at the University

of Toronto's geology department, he and Jakob explore their adopted city as if they were discovering a new archaeological site, uncovering its ancient streets and fossil fern and bones.

*Fugitive Pieces* forsakes linear storytelling for a poetic, multi-layered resonance. Most of the book's events—Jakob's rescue, Athos's death, Jakob's return to Greece to write, and his May 1995 second marriage to musician cousin Michaels (another excavator of the past)—are recollections described in Jakob's notebooks. His journals intertwine his own story of loss with numerous accounts of his grandfather's harrowing escape from the Nazis and scraps of poetry and philosophy. Later, these notebooks offer spiritual redemption to Ben, whose life and marriage have become shattered by the revelation of a long-held secret from his parents' war experience.

While occasionally the book's gorgeous, heightened language threatens to overwhelm the reader, *Fugitive Pieces* offers many pleasures. Like Athos and Jakob, Michaels has dug deep and come up with treasure.

DEANNE TILLOTSON



Michals: weaving in everything from botany to linguistics

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# Films

## Arnie, get your guns



Schwarzenegger: He shows them up and good—again!

## Schwarzenegger downloads data—and the bad guys

**ERASER**  
Directed by Charles Russell

Quentin Tarantino, in which the summer's big action movies do a hero escape from a tight spot by shooting a giant aquarium? Hate! Later in the movie, Schwarzenegger jumps off an emergency window, the hero smashes into a heavily secured building to download information from a computer housed in a giant white vault.

The answer, of course, is *Matrix*. Impossible. But the answer is also *Eraser*. Somewhere, either through an act of creative escape or a flock of small minds thinking alike, Hollywood has managed to create two summer blockbusters with apocalyptic U.S. agents who hack top-secret data from hard drives in white vaults. The resemblance, however, ends there. While *Matrix* is a movie in a stick, well-oiled, deviously cryptic suspense thriller, *Eraser* is an amalgam of stunts, shootouts and explosions fueled by a big, blundering script.

Arnold Schwarzenegger plays John Kruger, a federal marshal who works for the U.S. Witness Protection Program.

His job is to erase the identities of endangered witnesses and create new ones for them. But he spends much of his time erasing his opponents, usually in his first major screen role, Vanessa Williams co-stars as the distressed damsel, who discovers that her employer, a leading defense contractor, is plotting an illegal sale of advanced weaponry to the Russian mafia. The deal is shrouded in a high-level political conspiracy. And only in the story—defeating any suspense—it turns out that Kruger's boss (James Caan) is in cahoots with the enemy.

Schwarzenegger wades his way through a cornucopia of wretched stunts, from leaping off a gang of snapping alligators to skydiving without a parachute. But the essence of *Eraser* is gung-ho. The bad guys are armed with the most advanced rifle known to man, a "rail gun" that has X-ray sights and fire projectiles as close to the speed of light. Inevitably, Arnie gets his mitts on these massive weapons and strikes a classic pose—holding one big rifle on each hip. But which hip loops are so pumped as over, the movie is flat.

Although Schwarzenegger got his never been much of an actor, he can usually generate a certain charm chemistry. In *Eraser*, however, the workable style of director Charles Russell (*The Mask*) fails to capture it. Arnie seems to be just going through the motions, especially in his bare scenes with Williams, who seems stuck in a variation of *The Bad Guys*, but without the romance.

Despite some impressive firepower, the movie is grossly derivative. After all, there is just a few line between *Eraser* and *The Bad Guys*, and *Eraser* steals many of its lifts from the *Terminator* movies—including scenes of Schwarzenegger grunting as his mutated flesh is pierced by sharp objects, which have to be painfully excruciated. But *Eraser* is a pale replica of the prototype. And as Arnie rubs out anybody who gets in his way, the one thing he seems incapable of erasing is the cliché of his own image.

BRIAN D. JOHNSON

## Cozying up to Quasi

**THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME**  
Directed by Karl Walla and Gary Trousdale

As if it were not enough that the Americans have losted *Les Misérables* on France, now Mickey Mouse has lost his way with one of the great classics of French literature. The Hunchback of Notre Dame, Disney's 34th animated feature, turns Victor Hugo's epic tragedy into a lachrymose schmaltz, while offering something tourists have been seeking for years—Paris without the French.

Hugo's 1831 novel has gone through four previous screen incarnations (blaming Lee Remick, Charles Laughton, Anthony Quinn and Anthony Hopkins), but this Hunchback is defined beyond recognition. Essentially, it is a low-rent knockoff of *Beauty and the Beast*, without the magic or the charm. *The Beast is Quasimodo* (voiced by Tom Hulce), an outcast whose best friends are a trio of voodoo-frenchie gargoyles. And the Beauty is Esmeralda, a gypsy girl with a plumping nose and corn-hairer and the host of a Hollywood swimming pool. (She is voiced by Demi Moore, who perhaps just stayed in character after shooting her new movie *Striptease*.)

It is hard to say what young children are supposed to make of a romance in which a gypsy lady has a Hunchback, a priest and a whole knight competing for her favors. The sweet-hearted Quasimodo is led to believe that he has a chance with Esmeralda despite his deformity. He wicked master, the lecherous Frollo (Tony Jay), hatches a plan to marry her off to the flames of his fireplace, then decides to burn her at the stake. But it is Phoebus (Kevin Kline), the handsome and heroic soldier, who finally gets the girl. So much for the Hunchback's ever beauty.



A hunchback and his love: animated

Saving Quasimodo and Esmeralda from death, the film makes such a happy ending that makes no sense in Hugo's novel. Aside from teaching a generation of kids how to pronounce "noth," Disney has now patented the love triangle in which one gets hurt. The music, meanwhile, is generic and unimpressive. With the soaring angles of the cathedral looking like blueprints for a lairish stage set, the movie comes across as a cartoon storyboard for another Broadway musical—a quasi-movie.



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# Jane O'Hara

## The baby boomers confront mortality

**A** couple of weeks ago, a flyer came through my mail slot cordially inviting me to an open house. Refreshments would be served to music played by a classical duo. (Tasteful!) A children's area would be made available. (Thoughtful!) There was even going to be a draw for a color TV. (Commercial! Where do I sign?)

There was just one catch: It was an open house for a funeral parlor. Not that I'm squeamish. I've visited the dead many times, generally finding these places orderly and comforting. After the big shock of a death, there are never any surprises in a funeral home: the grief is controlled, the carpets are clean and the cullies are always hot. But, as a rule, this is one branch of the service sector where the customer's operating principle is "Don't call us, we'll call you."

I was struck by the dispatch of so openly marketing mortality. And these were no down-at-the-heels undertakers hoping to drum up some quick business. This was a class establishment known for outsourcing some of Toronto's wealthiest citizens. Maybe they hold open houses in brassy New York City or breezy San Francisco, but in Canada, morticians have always kept a low profile, hovering on the margins of grief. They don't rent limousines, offer discounts or take in cold-calling customers.

Clearly, something was afoot if this staid old funeral parlor had decided to open its doors, invite the wrath of its clientele and throw a little light on its secret services. And wraith-faced, they did. My mother thought holding an open house was a deplorable start. My aunt wondered how. What next, they wondered? Multilevel marketing?

But my pals, in their 40s and 50s, didn't get very worked up about it. At worst, some thought it "creaky," at best, "postmodern." All were curious. After all, we are the age group these avant-garde funeralists were targeting, what with their sister of free choice and cryogenics all around for the sake of their future. When boomers start moving on to their final rewards, the demographics of dying will be a bonanza for the embalmers.

In our short but self-proclaimed stay so far, we've proven ourselves both noisier and noisier than our parents. We have found meaning in our enlightened obsession with the everyday things they took for granted. It's my guess, if this trend continues, we won't take death lying down. Sure it may disturb us, but it won't stop us from discussing it over cappuccino.

Given the plague of AIDS and the nightly feasts of death on television, it's surprising we've come so late to this quandary of dying. But we have been busy. When you consider all the energy we've spent debating whether to use a chocolate cream on the new puppy or

whether to go with lavender in the bathroom, it's amazing how little thought we have given to the only two questions that really matter: how we got here and why we have to leave so soon.

I have a friend, just turned 50, who told me she's never been to a funeral parlor, never seen a dead body. That, to me, is like someone saying they've never been to a mall. But shops are changing. It's pretty common these days to find the subject of death serving at dinner parties. Full-length obituaries are making a comeback. And no longer are dying writers leaving the last word to other writers. They're documenting their own deaths: the endgame of first-person journalism.

"I am practicing making entries in my journal to record my passage into nonexistence," wrote New York intellectual Harold Brodkey before he died in January. Two weeks ago, Canadian comedian Marjorie Gress died but left us laughing after writing a wildly funny piece in *The New Yorker*, entitled "Cancer becomes me." Timothy Leary, the guru of the Me Generation, was another recent departure. Trendsetter that he was, he wanted to control himself to the hereafter in real time on the Internet. Archives to ashes, download to dust. He didn't manage that, but in farewell gave us something better—his recipe for Leary Biscuits. Melted cheese with marjorana on a thin cracker.

They didn't serve Leary Biscuits at the funeral parlor's open house. When I arrived at the door of the white building, the brass was polished, the attendants smiling. "Feel free to walk around," said a man in a strategically dark suit. "All these doors are open."

So I wandered. An advertorial, a flute and harp sounded in the middle distance. The main floor was set up with various displays showing the funeral home's religious versatility: Eastern Orthodox, Buddhist, Jewish, or a simple down-home memorial service. One floor below were the caskets and cremation urns, all made in and makers, the real or paralyzing choice, some in high-gloss steel and others made out of chipboard. The caskets made out of steel were an ugly price, but they were apparently "safe from the elements" and came with a sticker that said "Because you care." For \$165, ashes would be shipped to some preacher in British Columbia who would sprinkle them in the Pacific.

The embalmer was on hand, too. He was in his tool shop at the back of the funeral parlor, talking about lip glue and plastic surgery was, as happy and chatty as Mr. Rogers in his neighbor hood. I counted about 10 other embalmers. I was the youngest. People spoke in whispers, which made it hard to eavesdrop, but I managed, learning among other things that it takes about three hours for a body to be vapourized during cremation.

On my way out, I was disturbed for coming and handed a videotape, in case I had "any other questions." I did, but I knew they wouldn't be answered by watching my VCR.

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